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THE NEW REPUBLIC

A Journal of Opinion

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The Strain Increases

Great Britain and the Axis are like two wrestlers, each of which has a painful hold on the other but cannot throw him over the ropes. More devastating bombings of London and other important cities are punctuated by unexplained days of rest. The battle of raiders and counter-raiders continues on the high seas. The RAF keeps up its night bombings of war centers. The British blockade holds; food rations in Europe grow shorter, critical industrial supplies are being slowly depleted, sabotage by conquered populations grows.

The Italian end of the Axis now shows the greatest effect of strain. Repeated Greek victories have pushed the Fascists out of one-quarter of Albania and threaten even greater disasters. The command has been changed in Albania, Egypt and the Dodecanese; the navy has a new chief. Mussolini has found it necessary to issue a proclamation intended to reassure the Italian people, and promising quick victory. On the heels of this action the British struck a surprise blow in Egypt, capturing a thousand prisoners and threatening on a larger scale. There are even speculations that the Fascist regime may be in danger of falling and that Italy may be knocked out of the war this winter. The strain in Germany may be guessed by the fact that Hitler found it advisable to make a speech of explanation and defense to munitions workers.

The moral of all this is that the great boasters can ill withstand long postponement of the fulfilment of their promises. Demi-gods must be invincible.

The Spark Remains

The most cheering news about tragic France that we have heard lately came from a BBC broadcast quoted the other day in PM. It said that French troops in Mentone, a Riviera town on the Italian border, had put up a placard poking fun at the Italians retreating from Greece. "Notice to the Greek army," it says, "this is the French frontier." While there is still that much of a spark of life, France is not entirely defeated.

"Buy British"

Out in the Pacific Northwest a movement has started to help England by purchasing British-made goods. Posters urging this action have appeared in hundreds of store windows; mayors and other officials have proclaimed weeks to "Buy British"; and the British embassy has sent trade experts across the continent to confer on the idea. Arrangements have been completed to label all English merchandise with conspicuous marks.

The sponsors of the plan argue that Americans can thus aid the resistance to Hitler without jeopardizing American peace and neutrality. Money spent by Americans for British goods will be spent, in turn, in America for airplanes and other essentials with which to combat the Nazis. Much merchandise formerly obtained from the continent of Europe can now be produced in England—cosmetics, metal articles, leather goods, linens, sweaters, pottery and chinaware. British vessels are now making the westward voyage across the Atlantic with

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almost empty holds. They could carry a vast quantity of merchandise for America. Shoppers in the Pacific Northwest already have started asking for English articles, and it is believed the movement may become nationwide.

Mr. Cooke Revives the Ghosts

Two important schemes have recently been adopted to strengthen both defense and the national economy. One is to use the idle capacity and labor in "ghost towns" or even in places that are only half shadow. Depression and technological development have left these unused resources scattered all over the map. No single person knows what they can all do, yet many of them may readily be adapted to make munitions or parts of munitions. It was natural that the big contracts went to the great, established concerns that were known and responsible. These companies are now choked with orders. Their capacity would be immensely increased if contracts for separate items or parts could be parceled out to those smaller shops. Housing congestion and transportation difficulties would be alleviated by such decentralization; the workers could be employed where they are instead of being attracted to munitions centers not equipped to receive them. Surveys are now being made in order to bring the ghosts to life.

The other is the committee formed in the ship-building industry, composed of two representatives of AFL unions, two of the CIO, four of management and one each of the navy and the Maritime Commission, under the chairmanship of an industrial engineer representing the NDAC. This will act primarily to adjust labor disputes, but in addition it ought to do much to organize the industry for greater efficiency.

The chief motive power in both these plans is Morris L. Cooke, experienced and progressive expert in scientific management, acting under the authority of Defense Commissioner Sidney Hillman. More creative work of the same type is needed.

New York Makes a Plan

New York City is unfortunate in that it grew without any plan except the plans for private speculative profit, but it is fortunate that when a city-planning commission was finally established, a really modern instrument could be created. The commission is written into the city charter, and so is not dependent on the will of temporary administrations. Its members are appointed for eight-year terms, and in rotation. Two important means are available to translate its decisions into action: it draws up the capital budget of the city and so can influence the nature and location of public works for a long term, and its advice must be sought on zoning ordinances, which control private development.

After long study, the new commission, under the chairmanship of Rexford G. Tugwell, has brought out for discussion the basic element of a Master Plan. Three land-use maps have been prepared, one showing the present situation, a second the intermediate condition to be expected in ten years or so, and a third the land use to be aimed at in a longer future. The plan is not mandatory and may be revised from time to time. But once adopted, it will serve as a guide to current decisions. It assumes a slowing down or cessation of growth in the city's population. On this basis it predicts an elimination of present and future slums, an increase of parks, forests and open spaces of all types, more decentralization of industry and business so that people may live nearer their places of work, a decrease of the areas devoted to single-family or row houses, and a considerable increase in multi-family apartments —which are likely to be planned in larger units on modern housing principles. Let's not wait for the bombing planes to shock us into realizing the need for a livable city.

Mr. Willkie's Friends in Trouble

How much money was spent in the recent election campaign? Nobody knows, but the sum was certainly vast. The law limiting contributions was undoubtedly evaded by many people in various ways. Guesses were made before November 5 that the Republicans had spent perhaps $30,000,000 or $40,000,000 or more. The Department of Justice is now looking into this question, and has assigned to the work one of its ablest men, Maurice M. Milligan, who broke Pendergast in Kansas City. Pearson and Allen, in their syndicated column, point out that Mr. Milligan has a powerful weapon that many political contributors overlooked. Section 305-6 of the Corrupt Practices Act makes it a penal offense for anyone to fail to report political contributions of more than $50 in two or more states. Any number of people helped Mr. Willkie with donations far larger than that, in numerous parts of the country. Apparently almost none of them reported his gifts, and presumably these donors felt they were being pretty smart. If the Department of Justice does the sort of job that is predicted, many of these wealthy gentlemen are going to have an uncomfortable time. We weep for them—but not too hard.

Münzenberg

Recently the body of Willi Münzenberg was found hanging from a tree near Grenoble, in unoccupied France, and an investigation showed that he had almost certainly been murdered. Such at least is the burden of a delayed dispatch from Lisbon. If the report is verified, it means the end of one of the most adventurous careers in modern European journalism.

Münzenberg's specialty was founding newspapers and magazines to support the German Communist Party; he was called the Red Hugenberg and the Red Northcliffe. In the early 1930's he was running a

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woman's magazine, a children's magazine, a sporting magazine, a picture magazine with a huge circulation—in all more than twenty weekly and monthly journals, besides one of the largest book-publishing houses in Germany. When the country went fascist, all his ventures were stopped overnight. Münzenberg escaped over the Danish border, wearing a fur-lined overcoat and riding in a big limousine driven by a uniformed chauffeur. That was characteristic of him, considering that he had always been a radical masquerading as a rich business man, or vice versa.

During his years of exile, he published an important magazine in Prague and later a newspaper, Die Zukunft, in Paris. He was urgently requested to come to Moscow but declined the invitation, thinking that he might never come back. His split with the Communists had come because he insisted on continuing the United Front policy after it had become unpopular at the Kremlin. Finally he wrote a letter to Stalin in which he accused the party of betraying its principles. Where he had been recently is not known; there are unconfirmed reports that he may have been in a concentration camp. It is possible that, like many others, he was kidnaped by agents of the Gestapo. His death calls attention once more to the desperate need for getting all the German refugees out of France before the rest of them have been murdered. Anti-Stalinists like the late Willi Münzenberg are if possible in a worse situation than those still friendly to Moscow, since they have no worldwide organization to support them.

Minority Report in Brooklyn

The New York State Legislative Committee investigating subversive activities in the schools recently heard an extraordinary story from Dr. Harry Gideonse, president of Brooklyn College. The Communists in the undergraduate body became displeased with Dr. Gideonse, and although they are only a tiny minority, they proceeded to make his life a not so merry hell. Squads of Communist students, acting under instructions, rioted in the college corridors, blew whistles, burst into the classrooms to shout announcements of their own. Dr. Gideonse's house was picketed for two weeks, the parading squads apparently including some ringers who never had been in a college classroom and obviously never would be. Sometimes the pickets wore gas masks. His telephone wires were jammed with hundreds of calls in fictitious names, including that of Mayor LaGuardia. Fake telegrams were delivered to him in the middle of the night for the evident purpose of disturbing his rest.

Despite the attentions he has received, Dr. Gideonse is opposed to laws discriminating against the Communists. Surface "disinfectants" he says, are worthless unless society is prepared to grapple with the economic and social inequities that breed discontent with existing conditions. "Who is subversive?" Dr. Gideonse said in a speech last week, "the loud preacher of some Utopian concept or the thoroughly respectable, smug, self-confident person who insists on perpetuating the situation in which the preaching of Utopian ideas is likely to be listened to?" This seems to us the soundest of doctrines and Dr. Gideonse deserves full credit for sticking to his principles under trying circumstances.

California, Here It Comes

A few nights ago, we went to see "Brigham Young," now showing in the neighborhood movie houses (no advt.). One of the earlier scenes was of Brigham making his famous visit to the prophet Joseph Smith, then living in Kirtland, Ohio. The village of Kirtland turned out to be a single cabin on the shore of a little glacial lake that was surrounded by big Western pines, with mountains in the distance. Carthage, Missouri, which we saw a moment later, was a ranch house shaded by California willows and live oaks. Nauvoo, Illinois, had still more of the California flora, mostly willows. Council Bluffs, Iowa, was a parklike valley in the high Sierras, with sugar pines dotted about the landscapes and jagged mountains on the horizon. The same pines and the same mountains reappeared in western Nebraska; in fact they followed the Mormon caravan through the long-grass country, the short-grass country and the Rocky Mountains, to the very shore of Great Salt Lake. It was as if the masterly Brigham had ordered them to be dug up and carried along with the wagon train.

In other movies we remember seeing eucalyptus trees instead of elms in New England dooryards, sagebrush on the Kentucky hills and even palm trees shading the sidewalks of New York. We said nothing, thinking that there was no use in our being silly old botanical purists. But a covered-wagon picture like "Brigham Young" is a different matter. It sets out to prove that the pioneers were bold explorers who crossed a continent, and it proves instead that they were the biggest fakes in history. They started from Hollywood; they traveled day by day through ten thousand feet of film; and for all their efforts they never got more than two hundred miles from home.

The Radio Battle

The fight between the radio networks and the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers is moving into its most crucial stage. Already the Columbia network and station WOR have banned the playing of ASCAP music on their sustaining programs; by next Sunday NBC will probably have followed suit. By the new year, the ban will be extended to commercial programs as well. Only music from the public domain and from radio's own association, Broadcast Music, Inc. (BMI), will be heard on the major networks. This will mean thumbs down on Irving Berlin, George M. Cohan, Hoagey Carmichael, Kreisler, Rachmaninov

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and other celebrated composers. Radio's hand has been strengthened recently by the shift to the BMI of the Marks music-publishing house—the first of the leading houses to leave ASCAP and go over to the enemy.

The fight is based primarily on ASCAP's demand for 7½ percent of the gross sum paid for the use of broadcasting facilities. The networks argue that they should pay ASCAP only when making use of its music. Both sides charge that a victory for the opponent would mean unfair monopoly in the music world.

There is as yet no sign of an approaching decision or compromise, but it is impossible to believe that an arrangement of some kind will not appear. Radio today is in itself essentially a part of "the public domain" and sooner or later public demand must force a conclusion which does not limit enjoyment of what is very nearly a daily necessity.

Nursery of Republican Patriots

Thomas Jefferson's University of Virginia in quiet, rural Albemarle is currently the scene of a renewed fight for civil liberties and academic freedom. During the summer David Carliner, editor of The Virginia Spectator for 1940-41, was arrested for distributing peace handbills in the industrial backyards of Charlottesville, two miles below Jefferson's "little mountain." The charge was "distributing handbills without a written permit from the chief of police." Two years ago students arrested on similar charges learned that the Supreme Court decisions on a free press in no way bound either the police or the justices of Charlottesville. Mr. Carliner was fined five dollars on the charge. In addition he was fined twenty dollars and sentenced to ten days in jail for contempt of court for giving a false name to the arresting officers and failing to appear at the proper time in court. Upon appeal to the Corporation Court the contempt count was dismissed. The Corporation Court, however, held the city ordinance constitutional and sustained the five-dollar fine. An appeal is now pending before the Supreme Court of Virginia.

These events deeply stirred the officials of the University. Recalling that Jefferson was a man of honor, the Administrative Council ruled Mr. Carliner ineligible to return for his third and final year in the University's law school. President Newcomb announced through the Associated Press that Mr. Carliner's exclusion was a "routine matter." Prior to the "routine" action, the Dean had notified the printers of The Virginia Spectator to suspend publication of the first fall issue of the magazine. After the Administrative Council's action The Spectator, censored in several places, appeared. Two years ago the Dean banned The Spectator as "unworthy of the University" and it reappeared only after protests from college editors at Yale, Princeton, North Carolina, and the editors of The Virginia Quarterly Review.

Correction

A typographical error changed the meaning of a sentence in the article, "Standards of Living and of Life," in The New Republic of December 9. The sentence should have read: "What we need is far fewer farms, not more, and far more people in industry and in the professional, social and leisure services that we so badly require and can now so easily afford."

News Notes of a Week

The German freighter Idarwald was scuttled after meeting a British cruiser in a dash from her refuge at Tampico, Mexico. . . . The battleship Warspite was supposedly in hot pursuit of the German raider which engaged the Carnarvon Castle. . . . Rumania promised the delivery of 3,000,000 tons of oil to Germany in 1941. . . . London suffered its worst raid in three weeks and retaliated with concentrated attacks on fifteen Nazi bases in France and the Low Countries. . . . A new Anglo-Turkish financial agreement was expected virtually to bring Turkey within the sterling area and cramp German-Turkish trade. . . . The Germans reported mass U-boat raids, with their submarines now ready to roam the seas in packs. . . . General Lee, United States army expert, was recalled from his post in London to report on Britain's needs. . . . Clashes between Japan and the United States will be prevented, said Foreign Minister Yosuke Matsuoka, if both countries mind their own business.

Secretary Knox asked for $300,000,000 for use by the navy in improving air defenses. . . . President Roosevelt insisted on the building of the St. Lawrence Seaway as vital to national defense. . . . The Treasury planned a draft on wealth for defense use by the issue of taxable notes. . . . Bethlehem Steel led the way in plans to expand its steel-producing capacity.

Lags in Defense

THE MAJORITY of American citizens who want this country to give Britain every possible aid without going to war itself believe that the policy they favor is in effect. Both presidential candidates endorsed it; the one who seemed most sure to follow it was elected. Britain still has available purchasing power and can order anything she wants. Congress has appropriated large sums for expansion of defense industries. Mr. Roosevelt has enunciated his apparently generous rule-of-thumb by which we let Britain buy half of whatever we can produce. We have a skilled Defense Advisory Commission at work. The tendency is now to lie back and await results.

Yet the dispatches give us no rest. One British city after another is heavily bombed, and, while the destruction goes on, Hitler apparently keeps his great

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numerical lead in planes. German submarines, bombers and raiders are now sinking British merchant shipping faster than it can be replaced. Nobody knows how much his preparations for land warfare exceed those of the British, but judging from the results in the air and on the sea, and remembering the immense manufacturing resources he has captured, the prudent must fear that here as well he will be ready to exert superior power whenever the opportunity comes. Are we really doing everything we can to aid Britain, and in time? And are our own preparations for defense being pushed to the limit?

The answer to both questions is no. The fault would probably be speedily remedied if the people were aware of it. Only recently the British have overcome their natural caution about wounding our sensibilities or encouraging defeatism enough to let it be known that they are not getting all they need. Still, the public is not fully aware that this country is not doing all it can. This is what it must know in order that action may be spurred.

The deficiency falls mainly in three categories, and what is being done in each is largely a matter of judgment on the part of the administration. In the first category lie the decisions concerning how much to give Britain out of stocks already available or becoming available—equipment that either she or we may have at once. In this category are the fifty over-age destroyers already traded for naval bases, and the new giant bombers she has been allowed to buy. We have many more over-age destroyers. New fighting planes are coming off the runways every day. We possess hundreds of merchant ships, and many more are being launched.

Britain has extreme need for destroyers, merchant ships, planes. Only two considerations prevent her getting more of them—and of other things in the same category. One is the fear that isolationist forces would raise the cry that we are being drawn into the war. The other is that the criticism would be made that we were impoverishing our own defense. But is there anyone who does not know that if Britain survives, we shall not have to fight at all? Or that if she falls, the little more or less we can give her now would not make much difference to us? In that case it will be productive capacity for arms that will count. We should within a few weeks more than compensate ourselves for what we now let her have by taking over the weapons on order for her that would be coming from the factories.

The next category lies in the amount of effort and expense being devoted to rapid expansion of production. Everybody familiar with industry knows that a moderately slow program of increasing output is sounder and more efficient than one that grows too rapidly. Time is needed to master the new processes, to train the necessary personnel, to detect and correct mistakes. Each extra shift of workers is less efficient than the normal one; it produces at higher labor cost. A sudden jump in demand for materials increases the price, and may uncover actual shortages. Confusion and nervous strain accompany the whole process of speeding up. Furthermore, since increasing basic capacity requires many months, a program of doing everything possible now would necessitate more priorities and rationing. It is largely on these accounts that our defense industries are moving more slowly than they might. This is not exactly a deliberate choice by the administration; it is the natural way to proceed. But it would take a deliberate choice and a good deal of firmness to insist on the opposite way. "If we ourselves were at war," the saying runs in Washington, "it would be done. But would people accept it as long as we are not engaged?" Surely they must accept it, if they want to do their utmost to keep from being forced to fight. Hitler will not attack us if Britain is in the way, and we are ready.

Finally there is the category of organizing to the best advantage the effort and expense we are undertaking. Getting production both rapidly and efficiently is far more than a matter of appropriating money, drawing designs and signing contracts. It is also a matter of checking on the process, of expert engineering management both of single factories and of whole industries. No agency in Washington is at present equipped to do this on a sufficiently large scale. The army and navy inspect for quality, but they do little to oversee production from the point of view of management practices. The Defense Commission is occupied with policies and large decisions. There should be an administrative body for each critical industry, composed of representatives of management, labor, the defense services, and a competent expert in management. The industry should be organized as a whole to utilize idle capacity, schedule production, allot materials, develop substitutes, check the performance of single establishments. Those who know the requirements are advocating such organization. But again the answer is made, "Would the industries accept it, as long as we are not at war?" We believe they certainly would accept it if the people knew the need and proper leadership were offered. Labor in steel and elsewhere is already asking for such a step.

There is a final choice, concerning which the right answer is more difficult to make. It is the question how much to sacrifice present production, in so far as that is necessary in order to increase output a year or two hence. Thus, industry can devote all its effort to turning out what it can make for the armed forces now, or it can devote five percent or more of its effort to enlarging its plant and overhauling its methods and equipment in order to turn out a much larger amount in 1942.

This is a policy question of the first rank, the answer to which depends on the strategic judgment of those

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with the best means of knowing the facts. If our utmost force is so desperately needed in the next six months that what we can do in two years is insignificant by comparison, the answer will be to sacrifice nothing to long-term expansion. But if we can contribute enough now to be sure that Hitler cannot win within two years, it is wiser to expand and make an overwhelming contribution later. Our own judgment is that basic expansion is essential and need not be sacrificed if everything else possible is done. But few in Washington are sure, and decisions are daily being made at thousands of desks without any guidance on this point from those whose business it is to decide. What is necessary here is for the Commander-in-Chief to confront the issue and lay down a policy. We need, above everything else, a strategic plan.

Three out of four decisions which limit aid to Britain and the speed of production for defense are caused by the administration's fear of offending those who criticize it for edging nearer to war. If we were at war, it is said, the delaying decisions would be reversed. Yet the only possible consequence of this caution is to increase the risk of fighting, and of fighting under adverse conditions. This nation resolved to aid Britain against Hitler and to do so in its own interest. This is the only way to insure against having to cope with a victorious Axis. Is it the American way to be half-hearted about action we have firmly resolved to take? Are our citizens so lacking in common sense that they will not understand that the best way to become embroiled is, having decided to stand back of Britain, not to help her enough? Shall we let the fear of war plunge us into hostilities? This journal cannot believe that outspoken leadership in this issue would not elicit overwhelming support. The task of the United States for the next few months is to organize its economy exactly as if it were at war, in order to avoid hostilities in the near future or a war economy for a generation.

Who Would Appease Franco?

FOR SEVERAL WEEKS Washington correspondents have repeatedly announced that the United States government was considering a vast loan to Franco—anywhere from a hundred millions to a quarter of a billion—to be used in buying surplus American wheat and other products for the half-starved Spanish people.

It now turns out that these stories were all false. Apparently somebody in the State Department who is pro-Franco, pro-Fascist and pro-appeasement had been priming the newspapermen with misinformation for his own purposes. Secretary Hull on December 9 flatly denied that the United States had any such plan on foot. We understand on excellent authority that nobody can be found in the State Department who is willing to admit having set the stories afloat. If the individual can be caught, it seems obvious that he should be summarily dismissed for his glaring indiscretion.

The English are preparing to make a trade agreement with Spain, and at first it was feared that this meant a wholesale job of appeasement. Sir Samuel Hoare, co-author of the infamous Hoare-Laval plan to divide up Ethiopia, is the British Ambassador to Spain, and is working hand in glove with his old friend Laval, who is now Hitler's best friend in France. Why Sir Samuel was not thrown out of British public life long ago is one of those mysteries Americans find it hard to understand—just as they are puzzled to know why the pro-Fascists are allowed to remain in our own State Department. But Sir Samuel is not to have his own way. Britain is bribing Franco to keep him from going to war, but the bribe will be doled out with a medicine dropper. Under the plan, he will get so little in any one month that, while it might alleviate the suffering of the Spanish people, it could hardly be of material aid to Hitler.

The wisdom of even this scheme is doubtful, but it is miles better than the ambitious dream of the anonymous Francophile in the American State Department. A gift—for it would be nothing else—from America of a hundred million dollars or more would be treated around the world as meaning a complete change of policy toward the dictators. It would cause an immeasurable loss of prestige for us in Latin America, where Franco at this moment is trying to destroy our influence in every country. The one lesson many people find it hard to learn is: *appeasement won't work.* Those who still keep trying it are nowadays under the legitimate suspicion of being Fascists in democrats' clothing.

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Strikes in Defense Industries

How They Can Be Avoided

THE RECENT EPIDEMIC of strikes in the defense industries, ranging from the East Coast to California, has been accompanied by a rising tension in public opinion and a tendency to make harsh judgments because these interruptions of production endanger the flow of defense materials. Because the workers are the immediate producers, the tendency is to leap to the conclusion that the workers must be to blame.

In more informed circles these strikes, which have not usually been about such fundamental questions as wages and basic working conditions, have been attributed to various causes. Some say that they are due to a growing fear among the workers that in the name of democracy's defense they are to be robbed of their gains of the last eight years. Others charge that the strikes are due to sabotage by minority groups of Nazis and Communists who are making trouble, not for genuine and legitimate union reasons, but for secret ultimate purposes of their own. And it should be noted that even causes so widely divergent as these are not by any means exclusive of one another, for a small minority is able to make real trouble in labor relations only when among the majority there is general dissatisfaction or, even worse, vague but widespread apprehension.

It is perhaps as inevitable as it is unfortunate that in these circumstances we should begin to hear talk about new and forceful laws compelling workers to stick to their jobs. Advocating such laws may relieve the feelings of some people, but wide practical experience over many years has shown that compulsory laws are useless in the one important matter of maintaining and increasing production, and are disastrous in their implications. Perhaps the most striking and relevant proof of this is that during the last war Great Britain passed harsh measures to prohibit stoppages in the munitions industries. But they did not work. The number of man-days lost through strikes climbed from 2,400,000 in 1916 to 5,600,000 in 1917 and 5,800,000 in 1918. This increasing loss of production under compulsory laws happened when Britain was actually at war and when the leverage of public opinion was far more powerful than it is in the United States today.

Even in the totalitarian countries, every effort is made to minimize compulsory labor and to substitute propaganda addressed to the worker and calculated to make him feel that he is playing a magnificent part in the service of Leader and Fatherland. If the dictators cannot successfully achieve production by compulsion, it is a safe assumption that the democracies cannot do so; and certainly not without destroying the democracy they are trying to defend. The plain truth is that only loyal and zealous workers can or will produce effectively; and loyalty and zeal come voluntarily from within; they cannot be commanded.

If coercion is unavailing, what course should we follow?

What has happened to railway labor in the United States in the last fifteen to twenty years has often been referred to as a solution already at hand and generally applicable. There is error in that conclusion; but we can get an important hint from the railway labor experience, if we rightly understand the basic and indispensable conditions upon which that experience was built. The railway workers are highly organized on a national scale and have been for many years. Although the railways have been going through an extremely difficult time with a great pressure to cut wages, lengthen hours and reduce the number of employees, there have not been any important strikes. They have been avoided by the procedure set up under the Railway Labor Act.

This procedure is not at all complicated or mysterious. The Act requires the carriers and the employees to exert every reasonable effort to make and maintain agreements, and then it sets up a three-man Mediation Board whose duty it is in any labor emergency promptly to communicate with the parties and use its best efforts to bring them to agreement. If that fails, and the parties will not arbitrate the dispute, the Mediation Board may, if the dispute threatens to deprive any section of the country of essential transportation service, bring it to the attention of the President, who may appoint an emergency fact-finding board which is given thirty days to investigate and report. In the meantime, and until an additional thirty days after the report, there is no interruption of transportation facilities.

This direct and simple procedure has always worked. The significant and indispensable condition has been, however, that the plan was agreed to beforehand by the workers and the carriers in nationwide bargaining which preceded the passage of the Railway Labor Act. The workers, who share Abraham Lincoln's sentiment that "Thank God, in this country, we have the right to strike," know that they have not in any way surrendered their right but have merely postponed its use pending full discussion and study of the controversy with the aid of impartial mediators; and the carriers are in no danger of being lured by a false sense of security to close their ears to reasonable considerations.

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What we need in the defense industries is the building up of a structure of agreement along the lines indicated in the railroad experience: agreements made in advance, which provide for such a postponement of the right to strike, with the understanding that if the dispute is not settled by the agreed procedure then a strike may follow. For mediation of such disputes the National Conciliation Service is already available, and it has been ably supplemented in the defense industries by the labor division of the National Defense Advisory Commission under the direction of Mr. Sidney Hillman. It might well be further supplemented by the appointment of an emergency mediation board of three members, citizens in whom the whole country has confidence and who have had experience in such matters.

This plan is not offered as an infallible panacea. Despite the National Labor Relations Act, there are still employers who are bitterly opposed to labor unions, and some are still opposed to any written agreements with their workers. Newly organized unions are often less responsible and less able to control their members than are larger ones. And it is a truism of labor relations that the most quarrelsome period of an industry's existence is in the early stages of organization. Nevertheless, this is the road down which we must travel, and the sooner we get started the better.

Such a plan as this would have at least three outstanding merits:

1. It would entirely change the attitude of the man in the street toward labor disputes in the defense industries. At present, whenever production is stopped, he almost automatically blames the producer—the working man. But once the idea of an agreement between management and workers, including the proposed mediation clause, had been put across to the general public, the reaction would be, "Have this employer and his workers such an agreement? If not, why not?" The whole moral atmosphere would be changed at once. And I think it would help greatly to dispel the mirage that we can get production by compulsion.

2. The mediation clause would add to the "structure of appeasement" between workers and employers, and whatever does that strengthens and sustains the values of a democratic civilization. Was it not Plato who said that the creation of a civilized world is the victory of persuasion over force? And is it not essential to the success of democracy that the gap between the masses of the people and the government should be bridged by a network of voluntary agreement between pressure groups whose interests conflict?

Is not some such plan as this the application to industrial relations of those four pillars of democracy so engagingly enumerated by Mr. Carl Becker in The Yale Review last summer? They are: faith in the dignity and worth of the individual, the belief that it is better to be governed by persuasion than by coercion, the recognition of the long-run value of truth and its power when it is discovered by full and informed discussion, and the obligation to use it to promote the general welfare?

Those who are in a position to know, tell me that Great Britain has been saved from destruction, this last few months, because during the years since the last war she has built up a body of agreement between management and labor—a body far larger than exists in the United States. Without the understanding and mutual confidence derived from this structure of agreement, the terrific task of improvising a complete new defense equipment to take the place of what was lost before Dunkirk could never, I believe, have been put through.

3. The existence of the mediation clause in a union contract would be of enormous help to the procurement officers of our army and navy. These men are charged with the terrible responsibility, not merely of letting contracts for war supplies, but with making sure that the contracts will result in deliveries. They must always take a certain amount of risk; but it is certainly only fair to them that this risk should be reduced by reasonable agreements between the contractors and their workers.

Time is of the essence in our preparedness program. We cannot afford to make mistakes now which, by slowing up the schedule, may prove fatal. It is to be hoped that the men in Congress who are now seeking to pass laws coercing labor can be persuaded, in the interest of the country, not to try an experiment which universal experience shows is doomed to failure before it starts.

The ideas I have set forth are in the national interest, and not merely or primarily in the interest of labor. I should be glad, as The New York Post suggested the other day, to see the AFL, the CIO, the National Association of Manufacturers and the United States Chamber of Commerce join in a coöperative effort to see that union contracts with the mediation principle involved are written as rapidly as possible in defense industries everywhere.

WILLIAM HAMMATT DAVIS

"And Love Remembered Not"

Into the drowning midnight, into the lightless
underseas' weight of long night, profound and silent,
not the clear, pale, unreal gleam of your eyes
(drained from bright color by the persistent seas,
as crude green glass is smoothed and drained of all
but its last lovely pallor, and lies on the pale shore sand)
Not your strange eyes can lighten the darkness here,
where I lie so deep in the night, below even the tide's
change.

VALENTINE ACKLAND

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Singapore and the English Channel

THERE IS a great deal of loose and oversimplified talk in this country about sending all or part of the American fleet to Singapore, and it is advisable for the American people to keep their heads. Presumably the object of sending the ships would be to deter Japan from attempting to occupy the Dutch East Indies and Singapore. That this is a desirable object is self-evident. If it could be attained by just sending ships to the East, so much the better. Japan may indeed be bluffing, as is so widely assumed; but by poker definition only Japan knows that, and the only way for America to find out is to call her bluff. In other words, the final decision on whether American ships would have to fight on the way out to Singapore would be Japan's, not America's. That being so, it is better for America to remember that priority matters in politics as well as in arms manufacture and that the principle of taking first things first is sound.

All American action everywhere must be governed by the fact that there is a European war in progress. That war is incomparably more important to America than the Far Eastern war, and therefore all American action in the Pacific must be conditioned by the necessity of avoiding a war in the Pacific. This imposes no irremediable handicap, since as a matter of fact it is possible for America to accomplish its aims in the Pacific more effectively by acting in the Atlantic. In plain words, it is better to keep the ships at Hawaii and do more to help England. Then the question of sending ships to Singapore may never arise.

It is hardly necessary to argue the wisdom of avoiding a war with Japan now. The fact that the fascists want such a war is fairly conclusive evidence. Furthermore, it is a fact that there has been more talk in this country about sending American ships to help Great Britain in Singapore than there has been in Great Britain. Indeed, there is no evidence that Britain desires this. America might win such a war and win it quickly. But the risk is out of all proportion to the gain.

If Japan took up the challenge and America, in the decisive naval engagement, destroyed the Japanese fleet, it would not serve to keep Japan out of the Netherlands Indies and Singapore unless Great Britain won in Europe. If Germany won, America would of course have to recall its fleet to the Atlantic. If America were to lose the decisive naval engagement—and it must be remembered that the American fleet would go into action against the handicap of fighting thousands of miles from its base—then quite literally the American continent would be at the mercy of any powerful opponent on either ocean. And if the Germans should win in Europe, the most melodramatic imaginings of those who now seem hysterical might become real.

Even if there is only one chance in four of such an eventuality, the risk is not warranted, principally because it is not called for. In the present world conflict Southeastern Asia is a by-play. Temporary possession of territories there by the Axis is disagreeable but not serious. Permanent possession will be determined in Europe and not in the waters that wash the Malay Peninsula. The outcome in Europe will decide possession of the Dutch East Indies and Singapore, rather than the reverse. It is the outcome in Europe that must be kept in mind.

There are only two reasons for American concern over the South Pacific. The first is that there Japan might strike a blow that would paralyze Great Britain. The second is that by taking Indo-China, the Dutch East Indies and Singapore, Japan would begin the formation of a great Pacific and Asiatic Empire that could jeopardize the whole of the Pacific area and compel the United States to maintain a huge navy and eventually go to war. Incidentally, Japan would thus be able to interrupt America's supply of rubber and tin.

The first reason is not very solid. Great Britain cannot be paralyzed in the South Pacific. Her fate is being determined at home. It would do her little good for us to have saved her Singapore base if she herself had succumbed to Germany. If Great Britain does not come through, possession of Singapore will hardly help her. She will not keep Singapore, or any other colony. If she does come through, she will get it back. If she has to make efforts to do so, we can then properly consider how much help we wish to contribute. And we can contribute help then at a minimum of risk.

From the point of view of saving England—either because of fear of fascism as the principle of world organization or because a bloc of fascist empires would be deemed a menace to American security—it would serve little purpose for America to deploy its strength thousands of miles from the main battlefront. England can be saved in Europe alone, where her real danger lies. There, too, lies the threat of fascism as the principle of world organization. Germany, not Japan, is the source of both threats. If Germany is defeated, the Japanese menace almost lays itself. Or, at least, it can be dealt with relatively easily.

The second reason has more substance. Japan must indeed be restrained if there is to be peace and security in the Pacific. There can be no stability if Japan is on the march. There can be no stability if she can take and keep sovereignty over the territories of the South Pacific and begin making her way along the southern coast of Asia to the borders of India. The point is that Japan can be most effectively and easily restrained, not in the South Pacific but in the Atlantic, not by sending

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a navy to Singapore but by giving to England airplanes, munitions, ships for convoy, credit and whatever else is required for use against Germany.

All possible pressure should be levied against Japan. Whatever diplomatic, political or economic devices can work to frighten off the Japanese, or penalize them, should be put to use. But if America is forced to a decision—that is, if the Japanese do start southward—it will be better to let them go, for the present, and concentrate on Europe. That means not only to continue help for England on the present scale but to double it, expedite it and, as a matter of national self-interest, make it the first charge on the nation's economy. This will be less costly than a war in the Pacific, now or eventually, and it will be equally effective.

It may even be more effective. If the Germans should be defeated and the British navy could leave European waters with immunity, Japan's days in Singapore would be numbered. The British Grand Fleet could move toward Singapore from its home waters and the American Battle Fleet could start west from Hawaii. If the Japanese fleet were massed at Singapore, it could be cut off from its home ports, which would be at the mercy of the American fleet. If it came out to fight, it would face a superiority of three to one.

Meanwhile Japan could be cut off from the rest of the world. A screen of ships at Panama, Suez and Hawaii would sever her world trade and shut off all supplies except such as could be obtained from the neighboring continent, and these would not suffice. Japan would either be under siege, her naval arm pinioned at Singapore, or she would have to fight under conditions that would spell defeat. For Great Britain and America it would be a simple and easy war, and its results would be decisive for decades. In fact, thus might be offered an opportunity of laying, easily and quickly, once and for all, the spectre of a war or series of wars in the Far East. If Japanese aggression were once stayed and China assured of independence (as she would be if Japan were effectively suppressed), then the forces that make for war in the Pacific would be nullified, at least for the present.

From this point of view, in fact, it would not be particularly unfortunate if Japan did set out on an adventure toward the south. Japan's strength now lies in the fact that she cannot be reached. She can mass her power around her islands and invite others to come at their peril. She can fight in her home waters and thus fight with tremendous, if not decisive, advantage against any enemy which has not an enormous superiority in ships—something no other nation now has. This asset Japan loses if she stretches her naval line more than 1,500 miles to Singapore. Then she must guard and supply bases in the Dutch Indies and Singapore, keep communications open and fight far from her home bases and sources of supply. Under such circumstances she would suffer from the same disabilities that now operate against Western countries in the East.

Japan's land lines are already dangerously attenuated in China. In fact, so large a part of the army is now drawn out on the continent that sectors of China have had to be evacuated to organize the expeditionary force presumably intended for the southward advance. Supplying the army in China requires a large part of the Japanese merchant marine and has already put the country on short rations. The consumption of materials and capital has gravely depleted the country. Japan's condition may not yet be desperate; but it is perilous. To take the Dutch East Indies and Singapore would entail heavy losses—probably in ships and men, certainly in materials. Both garrisoning and provisioning would put a strain on the country that would drain its vitality farther and faster.

The war in China is not over. There is no prospect of Japan's being able to reduce her commitments there. There is less prospect of peace by compromise now than there was in the past. There is still no basis for compromise. The kind of peace that Japan would be willing to offer, China will not accept, since it would be tantamount to accepting the status of a Japanese protectorate. The kind of peace that China would agree to, Japan cannot offer, since it would be tantamount to acknowledging defeat and thus inviting a terrible reckoning at home. Even a Russo-Japanese thieves' bargain depriving China of Russian supplies and cutting up Eastern Asia into spheres would not necessarily bring China to her knees. China's dependence on external sources of supply for defensive war has been exaggerated. It is great, but not vital. Furthermore, while a Japanese-Russian treaty is not unlikely, an agreement that both would live up to is more than unlikely. It is to Russia's interest that Japan slowly bleed to death. Russia is hardly likely to stanch the flow. She may sign a diplomatic document agreeing to stop helping China, but she will continue to help, regardless of her signature.

The war in China will go on, and it is to America's interest to provide enough help to China to make that war as costly to Japan as possible. America should deny as much war material to Japan as she can. She should give further credits to China and shipping to transport supplies bought with those credits to Rangoon, for shipment over the Burma Road. China should be kept fighting, and fighting with increased effectiveness, not only because a strong and independent China is a guarantee of peace in the Far East but because thus the whole Japanese menace can be laid. It is not enough to prevent Japan from extending her sway southward. It is necessary also to prevent her from establishing a continental empire. Disputed dominion over China is as certain to produce chronic wars as disputed control over South Pacific colonies rich in raw materials. In

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fact, China still is the crux of the Far Eastern conflict. The whole Singapore-Dutch Indies question is only a complication induced by the European war.

If, however, China continues resistance on the present scale and, in addition, Japan extends her lines 1,500 miles or more to the southward, then—after having had to fight two land and sea engagements—Japan will be attenuated to such a degree that under pressure applied at the right points, she will snap all the more easily. That Japan will have to be dealt with in one way or another now seems clear. Ideally, she should be dealt with by changes from within. That is to say, the Japanese people should dispossess the military caste of power and put a stop to megalomaniac adventurings. But such action is now more remote than ever, for the military caste has, for all practical purposes, dictatorial power. The next best solution would be for internal economic exhaustion to bring Japan to involuntary retreat and probably, in consequence, cause the overthrow of the military caste. This may come about. But if Japan succeeded in extending her sway through the accident of the European war and thus replenished her strength, a situation would arise that would force other nations to fight—America in particular. Japan has to be dealt with, and probably she can be dealt with more easily if she overextends herself by going as far as Singapore. This, of course, is contingent on Great Britain's coming through.

The crux, that is to say, is British survival in Europe. Everything in the Pacific and Far East is subordinate thereto and dependent therefrom. Whatever Japan does now in the South Pacific should be put in the category of unfinished business. For America there is only one sensible course. Concentrate on Europe. Give all help to England. Bring England through. Then the Far East will take care of itself or be taken care of with ease and dispatch. And thus, incidentally, the door will be closed to what might in time come to be America's own imperialistic adventurings in the East—undertaken originally for legitimate defensive purposes and maintained for the wealth and power they yielded.

NATHANIEL PEFFER

The Men Who Make the Future

II. *Science—Defender of Democracy*

This is the second of a series of articles based on interviews with a number of the leading research experts in the physical sciences in the United States. Under the pledge that they would not be quoted by name, these men—Nobel Prize-winners, heads of departments in great universities, directors of research for big industrial corporations—talked freely with Mr. Bliven about their general philosophy, the broad tendency of their thought.—THE EDITORS

CAN A DEMOCRACY defend itself with the same efficiency found in the totalitarian states? To be specific, can our science meet the present emergency and compete successfully with the followers of Hitler? Here in America we have heard much of how Der Führer has mobilized the brains and ingenuity of his laboratory experts in fulfilment of his ambition. No such universal mobilization has taken place in England or the United States. Is it possible that by this mass effort Hitler may have put his scientific research far ahead of anything we have to offer?

No, is the answer given by leading American research scientists who have recently discussed this subject with me freely, on the pledge that their names would not be published. Momentarily, the marshaling of scientific brains may aid the Nazi war machine somewhat, but in the following ten or twenty years or more, they expect Germany to lag far behind in the race for technological supremacy. As one man, an American Nobel Prize-winner, says: "Germany's scientific clock is running down. Momentum may keep it going for a few more years but with steadily diminishing power."

In Germany, pure research has been almost entirely abandoned. Every worker in every laboratory is keyed up to efforts on behalf of specific purposes for the glory of his Reich and Führer. But many of the great discoveries of science in the past in all countries have been of a different category. They have come when a research worker was looking for something else, or for nothing at all—just satisfying his own curiosity. Thus the whole vast coal-tar dye industry was made possible because a chemist tried to invent synthetic quinine. Electrical science was stimulated because Mrs. Galvani happened to hang up a pair of frog's legs suspended by a copper wire so that when the wind blew they swung against an iron railing and twitched with the release of the electrical impulse. One should not, of course, overemphasize the quality of sheer accident in great discoveries. Many times they result from economic pressures; sometimes they follow as a logical outgrowth from the work of other scientists in various parts of the world, so that if one man hadn't produced a given idea at a given time, someone else would probably have done so not much later.

I sat not long ago in a room in the great Mellon Institute in Pittsburgh, famous research center. Before me were filing trays containing numerous cards, and each of these cards recorded one important recent

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development in chemistry. There was a separate tray for each important country throughout the world, so that at a glance one could make a quantitative comparison of the work done. The number of cards for the United States was many times larger than that for Germany. Assume if you like that part of the work done in Germany is so secret it doesn't even get into the Reich's own scientific journals—an unlikely assumption. Even so, America is far in advance. Remember, too, that there is a "cultural lag" in this matter. Work done today may be the reflection of a creative impulse of twenty years ago that has now disappeared.

Said one of America's greatest astronomers, who is also famous for the breadth and depth of his interest in other aspects of science: "Search the records of history and you will find that most of the great discoveries have been made by young men, often between eighteen and twenty-three or twenty-four. In Germany, nearly every man in that age group is in a government laboratory, the army, a work camp or somewhere else under circumstances that give him no chance to follow his own independent lines of inquiry."

Hitler's country has hurt herself by recklessly dismissing or exiling her men of science. Whatever racial theory you may hold, no sensible person can affirm that scientific genius is any respecter of race or color. Many of Germany's outstanding scientists of a few years ago were wholly or partly of Jewish blood or had wives in that category. Others, entirely "Aryan," voluntarily left Germany because they did not like Hitler. Any country has done itself harm, from the scientific point of view, when it has lost such men as Albert Einstein, James Franck, Nobel Prize-winner in atomic research; Wilhelm Frei, the great dermatologist; Richard Goldschmidt, noted biologist and geneticist, and scores of other distinguished men whom I could name. No nation has ever, at any time, had an exportable surplus of brains.

Has science run away with us, producing technological advance faster than we can absorb it? And should we therefore have a "moratorium" on new invention and discovery for a few years? To this the scientists replied with a unanimous and violent No. They were quick to point out that such a moratorium in the United States would be a disaster unless it were carried out simultaneously in all other countries. Probably no such worldwide promises would be made; if they were made, they would be secretly broken as other international treaties have been. Moreover, the "cultural lag" affects this question. The inventions of importance today were made years ago; those being made now will not greatly affect us for a long time to come.

But the scientists feel, in any case, that we cannot solve our problems by running away from them. Invention and discovery have put into the hands of mankind in the past decades almost unbelievable powers for good or ill. If they are used for ill, that is not the fault of science, but of civilization itself, of backward political leaders. As one expert remarked, it is nonsense to suppose that laboratory research has let loose terrible brutality in the world. Brutes use science; science doesn't make brutes. Until human society develops some other way of settling quarrels, people will still try to kill each other even if every weapon is abolished except the clubs of the Stone Age.

Said a man who is commonly regarded as the outstanding inventive genius of the automobile industry: "To suggest a moratorium on science is utter foolishness. If you fear future advance, why not also seek to destroy what we have now? Why not go back arbitrarily to the conditions of twenty-five years ago, or a hundred, or ten thousand?

"The trouble with the world is, not that we have too much technology but that we have too little. Unemployment in America should be a challenge to our inventors. We have the manpower; we have the money; if workers are standing idle, it is because we don't have the projects—that is, we have not invented or improved enough things. What holds us back?

"American industry needs to perform ten times, a hundred times, as much research as at present. Only a tiny fraction of the business firms of the country are doing anything like an adequate job. We are far too complacent, too easygoing. As a nation we need more intellectual curiosity, a greater driving urge to make things better."

The salvation of the automobile industry, according to this outstanding expert, has been the custom of new models every year, which brings not only changes in styles but new devices. While this has been done partly to make last year's car seem obsolete and thus expand the market, from a purely technical point of view the result has been a blessing. The industry has been forced to keep on the alert and by doing so it has set a far swifter pace in technological procedure than it would have done without this spur.

"If I were in the furniture industry, I should try to turn it upside down. Furniture manufacturers seek to make most of their output look like something old—perhaps following the wishes of their customers. But where would the automobile business be if we tried to make our cars look like those of the year 1910?

"If you have intellectual curiosity, research can begin profitably almost anywhere. Rub your hands together, and you produce heat. Why? The answer is friction. But what is friction, and why does it produce heat? Nobody knows. The answer you get if you persist is, 'friction is what produces heat when you rub your hands together.' One of our great automobile-manufacturing firms ten years ago put a scientist to work on precisely this question. He hasn't yet found the answer; but he has found out so much else that

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today the company can put bearings into a vehicle and run them hundreds of thousands of miles without even looking at them again."

I was astonished to discover these top-rank scientists deeply concerned about one problem that at first glance seems to have little to do with the world in which they live. It is the problem of "technological unemployment," the loss of jobs that takes place when a new machine is introduced as a substitute for many pairs of hands. The point is of course that the scientists have been much criticized for inventing the machines that create technological unemployment, and resent it.

In general, they vigorously denied that the total number of jobs available is reduced when new machines are put to work, or at least, they said this need not be true with intelligent planning. They mentioned as an example the fact that what might be called the "horse-and-buggy business" used to employ about a million men forty years ago. The automobile came along and destroyed the greater part of those million jobs, but by 1937 it was giving work to six million men, plus another million in the accompanying oil industry. This story, many scientists believe, is typical. Whatever increases the power of a group of workers to produce wealth ought, in theory at least, to add to the riches available for our whole society.

There are two kinds of inventions, each with a different effect on unemployment. Revolutionary ideas like the telephone, the automobile or television may create whole new industries. Others merely improve existing processes or products, and in some cases, and at least temporarily, they may cause deep distress over wide areas. In steel, the "continuous automatic strip mill" has resulted in an enormous reduction of the amount of labor needed. A witness before the TNEC not long ago said that with the mill 126 men can do the work previously performed by 4,512. In a short time, more than 38,000 workers were dismissed because of this fact. In one town in Pennsylvania, the dismissals numbered 5,700 and at the time of the testimony there were 7,000 families on relief, *64 percent of the total population.*

The scientists, on the whole, feel that unemployment of this sort is a matter that should not be left for the individual worker to solve as best he can. The responsibility lies, first, with the employer who puts in the new method. He should make every possible effort to retain as many of his former workers as he conscientiously can. (Sometimes the employer dismisses his old workers and hires fresh ones on the ground that they have no fixed habits of work to unlearn.) If this is not possible, he should pay them some sort of dismissal compensation to tide them over, which should be saved up in advance out of the earnings of the business. Where necessary, the federal, state and local government units must lend a hand, to try to find some other work for these displaced employees to do, to train them for it and to help them get into it. The morale and the trained abilities of our citizens are among our precious national assets, not to be tossed lightly aside.

Those research experts who have studied this question deeply believe that the problem of technological unemployment is bound up with that of the distribution of goods. When the machine takes the place of a large number of men, the result is usually a tremendous decrease in the cost of production per unit. The business firm can then do one of two things with the money: it can pass the saving along to its customers in the form of lower prices, or it can keep prices where they were and make very much larger profits. If the saving is passed on to the customer, on the "Ford principle," business is expanded, general prosperity is aided and thus, indirectly, jobs are created for the displaced workers. If the money is piled up in the form of larger profits, the total volume of business is not so likely to be increased, the circulation of goods and money is not speeded up, and the additional jobs are not created. What the experts call "sticky prices"—in this case, prices that do not come down as fast as they should—gum up the wheels of industry.

Laymen like myself worry a good deal about the technological lag in defense. We remember the hair-raising stories from the last war telling how the British army refused for years to adopt tanks, steel helmets and other devices. We recall the Wright brothers' long effort to get the war departments of various countries even to look at their airplanes, still less to adopt them. Colt had a dreary struggle before he got anyone interested in his repeating revolver, and there are scores of similar incidents. Naturally, we ask ourselves whether new ideas today are getting adequate attention.

The scientists make no flat promises in this regard; there is always a human factor to be considered. The army and navy between wars do not have a great deal to do, and there is an inevitable tendency to get somewhat tangled up in their own red tape. The experts believe, however, that the preparations this time are better than they have ever been in the past and perhaps better than they now are in any other country. The National Defense Research Committee is aiding the National Defense Advisory Commission. Its small membership list includes key scientists of the whole country. The National Inventors' Council takes care of the individual who has an idea for a new weapon or a new type of defense, and sends it in. The men who do this work have an enormously difficult task. Out of every thousand ideas all but about five are crackpot schemes. It requires great mental discipline to reject perhaps 900 proposals and still keep your mind sufficiently open to see that the nine hundred and first is a work of genius that should be adopted at once.

Let me return a moment to the great research expert

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of the automobile industry whom I have quoted above:

"The layman doesn't understand that there is a tremendous time lag with every invention between the brain of the inventor and the wide-scale use of the device. It is highly probable that no important new inventions of any kind will be developed during the war. Hitler has shown none; all his devices are old and familiar ones, though perhaps used in new ways or on a larger scale than is customary.

"In civilian life, the average lag between the beginning of a new idea and its general acceptance is great. The shortest term I have heard mentioned by any competent expert is ten years, and I think myself it is nearer to twenty-five. Much of this time is often used up while the inventor and his associates are trying to find out what the new device or product is really good for. For example, the Diesel engine has found wide acceptance in America only in the last few years, yet the invention itself is more than forty years old. It did not become important until a determined effort was made to think through the problems afresh and in terms of this country today. Those problems are rarely the ones the layman sees, or thinks he sees. That is why the public and the technicians are so frequently at cross purposes in a time of stress such as the hasty preparation for possible war."

In one field, science is playing an enormously important role in national defense. The health of the nation is a crucial matter in determining what we shall be able to do not only in our armed forces but behind the lines in the factories. The United States Public Health Service has some exciting plans in this connection that cannot yet be revealed in detail. In general, our health is good—far better than it was in 1917. Notable strides have been made in conquering certain diseases, including, by the way, the venereal infections in which medical science has lost much of its interest, because it considers that the whole problem has been solved. Sulfanilamide and its derivatives have enormously reduced the menace of pneumonia, streptococcus infections and other ills. A vaccine recently developed by the Rockefeller Foundation holds out the hope of immunity against most types of influenza.

But much remains to be done, including some desirable actions that are perhaps only possible under the pressure of national defense. It would be an excellent thing, for example, if we were to follow the lead of Great Britain and require our millers to fortify their white flour with Vitamin B1 and calcium. Great efforts are still needed in the way of teaching our whole population to lead a sane and natural life.

Strictly speaking, science has no purpose except finding out a little more about the world; yet scientists in their own minds have definite ideas as to the meaning and directions of their work. Are they primarily concerned to rectify the mistakes men have in the past imposed upon themselves through their ignorance? Or to advance to new plateaus of achievement? What are the worst of these past mistakes, and what is science doing to correct them? These are some of the questions I shall discuss in my third article.

BRUCE BLIVEN

Nelson: He's Bought an Army

OFF IN A CORNER of the chaste Federal Reserve Building in Washington, now headquarters of the National Defense Advisory Commission, is the eight-by-ten cubbyhole of Mr. Donald Marr Nelson. Mr. Nelson is not a full-fledged member of the NDAC; he has the subordinate title of Coördinator of Defense Purchasing. But from his miniscule hideout, he has, during the last five months, supervised the purchasing of equipment for a prospective American army of two million men, perhaps the greatest hurry-up buying job in history.

Most of us are inclined to think that buying is easy; the only hard part is to find the money. But consider the perils that Mr. Nelson faced. In June and July, Congress gave the NDAC more than ten billions. That was potential purchasing power equal to one-seventh of our total national income. Some four years ago, the injection of a mere two billions—the soldiers' bonus—into the stream of national purchasing power rocked our economy violently. Mr. Nelson has now succeeded in allotting virtually all of his $10,000,000,000, and our general price level has hardly so much as twitched.

This is something believed to be unique. Modern nations at war, or preparing for war, have had either to permit slow inflation—as in England today—or to fight it with price-fixing, police spies and jail sentences—as in Germany. Mr. Nelson, however, is doing no crowing. A number of prices already show restiveness; few experts have faith that the price level can be held down indefinitely.

How was the present miracle accomplished? As Mr. Nelson tells the story, it was due to the Army Quartermaster Corps—which is unquestionably wildly extravagant buttering-up on Mr. Nelson's part—or to the NDAC's technical staff, or to coöperative manufacturers. Observers, however, give the credit to Mr. Nelson. Executive vice-president of Sears, Roebuck, he was first linked to the defense program last May when he came to the Treasury to help Mr. Morgenthau with the British airplane buying. In the interval since then, his influence and prestige have grown like Iowa corn. Should Mr. Roosevelt decide to give a chairman to the

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present headless NDAC, many observers think that Mr. Nelson will be named.

His colleagues illustrate his quality by citing his buying policy for cotton uniforms. The draft bill, making it certain that a mass army would be created, was passed by Congress in August. From his mail-order-house experience, Mr. Nelson knew that the men's summer clothing industry was entering its dull season. This fact, however, did not seem to interest the army. Facing the problem of caring for conscripts during the present winter, it was feverishly anxious to obtain wool uniforms, overcoats, blankets. Let me do the worrying, Mr. Nelson suggested. Upon his persistence, the army's first clothing orders were for cotton—uniforms, shirts, undershirts, handkerchiefs. They were rushed out to mills and factories that had, temporarily, unlimited excess capacity, and no excuse to jack up prices.

Over a long period, the Quartermaster Corps had developed rigid specifications for cotton cloth. A well heeled business man—whose name the NDAC has succeeded in keeping secret—somehow got wind of the army's intention of buying its full cotton-garment requirements at once, and quietly cornered the supply of cloth meeting the army's specifications. Through counter-espionage, Mr. Nelson learned of this coup, and as quietly had the army's specifications changed. In the end, the business man was left with his supply of cloth unsold.

With woolen uniforms, Mr. Nelson took an opposite course. In August, the men's civilian clothing season was just beginning; the trade knew that Mr. Nelson held potential orders for two million garments, enough to absorb a large part of the country's productive capacity. The clothing market writhed with nervousness; raw wool prices started an advance. After hard consultations with the army, Mr. Nelson announced that he would buy only enough uniforms to clothe each batch of recruits as they were inducted into service. A large part of the army's wool-uniform requirements will not be filled until the industry reaches its slack period next summer—and when wool from next spring's clip is in sight.

A short time back, Mr. Nelson was engaged in buying army boots. He began by calling for a study of the production facilities of the country's chief shoe-manufacturing areas. Mr. Sidney Hillman's Labor Division furnished estimates of the number of skilled and unskilled shoe workers now unemployed in each district. The Agriculture Department calculated the potential labor supply on farms. From these and other data, the army's boot requirements were split up geographically; each area was assigned contracts corresponding to its probable unused capacities.

Mr. Nelson was born in Hannibal, Missouri; he has just turned his fifty-second year. He was graduated from Missouri University in 1911, and has been with Sears, Roebuck during his entire business life. He is about six feet, gray, with eyes as sharp as a fox's, and a jaw that shuts like a breech-bolt. In public his manner is patient, kindly, something like that of a railway information clerk. Among his colleagues he is jovial, vigorous and given to forthright speech. In and out of his little coop in the Federal Reserve Building, at intervals of fifteen minutes or so, for twelve or fifteen hours a day, go the men who are running the vast and terrible business of war, the men with whom schemes that add to the fabulous Nelson legend are concocted.

It is a remarkable fact, according to report, that alone in Washington Mr. Nelson is not disturbed over the NDAC's lack of a responsible head. Whenever instances of the NDAC's need for a chairman are cited —for example, whether civilian airplane manufacturing is to be continued—his colleagues say it invariably develops that Mr. Nelson has just before had a few people in, and that the issue is as good as settled. The serious conflict between the navy and the Maritime Commission for shipyard space is understood to have vanished at the Nelson touch. If a big-business man, skilled in the uttermost refinements of his trade, even if apparently oblivious to many of the New Deal's peacetime aims, is to run our war industry, he is today the foremost candidate.

Washington JONATHAN MITCHELL

Subway

Under the church's lawn, in the land of electric clocks,
The subway train is plunging into the lungs of the rocks:
And as the bald Negro with the glasses reads his True Story
And the old woman is quivering behind her morning glory,
The inconceivable girl with the timetable, feather and leer,
A mammoth dumpling of sex, is ensconced on the atmosphere.

Beneath the tons of complacence the subway deftly delves
With people sitting satisfied with their disconsolate selves:
A child across the way is dangling out of a fairy-tale book,
Dipping in the advertisements the divining rod of her look:
The dismal fans are languidly stroking the beard of the wind:
Behind the newspaper fronts the sins of thought are sinned.

This is the skin of death and every pore is a face
Pulsating against tomorrow, the vacuum thighs of space:
This is life the story-teller, telling endless tales
To keep himself alive as the iron eyelid falls:
This is the explosion chamber, the secret room of the spark
Where the populations whirl with the poured breath of the dark.

A jungle of prongs is scraping the tough hide of the present:
The huge centipede of station leaps at the vein imprisoned:
The subway's galvanized throat is torn into craters of speed:
The sullen meanwhile is bulging with the ingots of greed:
And what is true is in conspiracy with the thing that seems
And steel continues to scream, so long as man screams.

OSCAR WILLIAMS

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Washington Notes

Stand-Off Defense

SINCE LAST JULY, these Notes have commented on the vast, underground struggle in progress between New Dealers and big-business men for control of the defense program. From reports of what Mr. Roosevelt told visitors just before his departure for the Caribbean, a guess can tentatively be made about the future. There isn't going to be a clear-cut decision; the struggle will never be ended.

What informed observers predict is this: Messrs. Knudsen, Stettinius and Nelson—particularly Mr. Nelson—will stay at the top of the defense hierarchy. Mr. Nelson will tend more and more to become a super-coördinator, a sort of deputy President for arms production. On the other hand, the New Dealers will have official status, so to speak, as planners and critics. They will have the President's authority to inquire into what the big-business men are doing, and they will bring back their findings directly to him. However—except in labor matters, where Mr. Hillman's division of the NDAC has a large measure of authority—the big-business men will act, the New Dealers only talk.

As nearly as can be determined, the first test of strength between the two groups has already occurred. As you may recall, since last July the position of the New Dealers has been that the big-business men were, so to speak, sabotaging their own endeavors. The New Dealers thought that eventually the big-business group would demonstrate before the voters their incapacity and feebleness, and that thereafter the New Dealers would take over.

Today we are facing a shortage of steel-producing facilities. This is just what the New Dealers predicted weeks ago in memoranda to Mr. Roosevelt. What course did Mr. Roosevelt take? If reports may be believed, he had Mr. Stettinius, within whose province steel production lies, on the White House carpet to explain. As a result, Mr. Stettinius put extraordinary pressure on the steel companies, and already Bethlehem has pledged itself to a plant-expansion program. Presumably the other major producers will follow, although Mr. Stettinius' own U. S. Steel appears to be showing great coyness.

If we are to have a fully functioning economy, a national income of $100,000,000,000 a year, such an increase in steel (15 or 20 percent) is almost certainly not enough. But the steel industry will attempt to hide its shortcomings. Already it has begun informally to "ration" steel to non-military consumers. The NDAC itself has hinted that the production of 1942 passenger automobiles—that is, the cars whose manufacture will begin next August—must be curtailed. In other words, we may have guns and butter, but not guns and low-priced cars—which is what the New Dealers say is wrong.

However, in any case, here we have what experienced observers believe is the pattern for the future. The New Dealers formulated a valid, important criticism of the NDAC, and saw that it was placed before Mr. Roosevelt. In turn, Mr. Roosevelt compelled the NDAC business group to modify and strengthen its objectives. And then the NDAC group forced their former business colleagues to yield a little, but not enough. Watch for this pattern to repeat itself.

In his annual report a few days ago, Admiral Stark, chief of the navy, vigorously revived the question of fortifying Guam. In the last two years, Congress has twice drawn back from authorizing a Guam base. Observers predict there will be a complete change of sentiment at the coming session. It is entirely possible that the debate over Guam will define our Far Eastern policy for a long time to come. If a Guam base is approved, as is now expected, we shall definitely and permanently become a Far Eastern military power. Guam itself, a coral reef, can never become a stronghold comparable to Pearl Harbor at Hawaii. It forms, however, a halfway house between Pearl Harbor and Cavite in the Philippines, and experts say that Cavite, properly developed, will have the naval importance of Gibraltar. The navy, in what would appear to be defiance of the previously expressed will of Congress, has carried out preliminary work in the development of Guam's harbor. It would take, however, another two years before Guam could be transformed into a satisfactory advanced base.

Mr. Martin Dies continues to be an unsolved problem. Probably the House will not give him the million that he is asking for; on the other hand, his committee is certain to be continued with an appropriation at least as large as his present $100,000. Three or four years ago, Mr. Dies could have been reasoned with by his Texas colleague, Speaker Rayburn. He was a politician, and behaved like one. Now he has become a mystic; he remains apparently brooding in Orange, Texas, for long intervals, emerging for mysterious doings in New York and Chicago. In his rare appearances in the House, he stalks alone, wrapped in portentous mystery. The House would gladly vote him and his committee out of existence; it hesitates chiefly because the Gallup poll showed 75 percent of the voters supporting him.

After the defense program, the chief conflict here during the last few days has concerned next session's tax program. All indications are that business will get off lightly. This is not altogether contrary to the New Deal group's desires; it has consistently been opposed to heavy taxation until full employment has been reached. Government experts believe that, at the current level of business activity, the 1940 tax schedules will bring in nearly eight billions, and the ordinary governmental expenditures—including about a billion and a half for "regular" War and Navy Department outlays—are running about nine billions. Thus, under Mr. Roosevelt's program, taxes need to be raised but little.

However, the Budget Bureau is now engaged in slicing ordinary expenditures far below previous years; Mr. Woodrum's proposed joint congressional budget committee can be expected to cut still deeper. Observers believe that, in another month, two dangers will be sharply apparent. One is that relief appropriations will be reduced beyond the point that reëmployment justifies. The other is that business, relieved of the fear of a tax increase, will begin to chisel away at the 1940 law, particularly at the New Deal's attempt to relate war taxation to capital return.

Washington T. R. B.

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River, Come to My Door

MR. JIMMY SAVO sounds funny of course, but he is after all as much a mister as certain leading-men, as well as being a very fine clown in the great sense. His singing to the river to stay away from his door is the perfection of all skill in that field of full, free harlequinade. This is the field where the Fratellini are happy (or were), where the wits of man, springing and happy, dance the whole art of the theatre; and where the dancing theatre expresses and measures the vitality of our wits.

The one-man show, more or less, that Mr. Savo has at last got to town with, serves us like the storks in the old wheeze. Like the biggest stork who brought babies to the elephants, he has a present for the biggest producers; and for the jump-up, over-night, shoe-string producers he has a warning, like the littlest stork, whose business was to frighten débutantes. Leave storks and say of the pure element in this Savo clowning what Mr. James Gray in his book on the Illinois[1] says of rivers. Rivers, he says, have only beauty and usefulness.

"The Illinois" comes along in due course in the series that the Rivers of America has promoted, the plan at the start to be credited to Miss Constance Lindsay Skinner, the editors of the series, Mr. Stephen Vincent Benét and Mr. Carl Carmer, the Art Editor, Miss Ruth E. Anderson. This book of Mr. Gray's is an absorbing ornament to the series, and brings a great many things beside the river close to our door.

One of these things is the skill of a practised writer, by which so much information, mood and whim, so many facts, and such a stream of Americana, are shaken out and unified into a highly readable book, a gift book even, with, as it were, a bite. The sources at hand for Mr. Gray were plentiful: the Illinois Historical Collections, early diaries written by explorers, priests, et cetera, and the whole sum of history that includes pioneers, French, English, American, the young Lincoln, the slavery issue, the sanitary canal for Chicago, and name after name that strike our modern ears as if they were all balladry and lusty circus painting instead of being a part of the nation's chronicle, to which they truly and basically belong.

This account of the Illinois River is not only widely informed; its very lay-out of chapters is imaginative and expert—those motifs of improvising a new world, the accommodations for tourists, rivermen, little ways of being gay, the hermit of eternity, the lawyer on horseback, American sovereign, Illinois cavalier, barge-line sailors, shrine on a hilltop, local as a turtle, Steamboat Elsie preserves a tradition, the poets explore, Miss Fleming remembers, the struggle for water, and so forth and so on.

That first chapter about the "mighty crooked water" goes delightfully forward to the second chapter, on the Indian tribe of Illinois, who had, according to the Sieur de Liette's "De Gannes Memoir," "legs that seem drawn with an artist's pen," "the whitest teeth imaginable," and "faces as beautiful as white milk, in so far as is possible for Indians of that country." The notes on Lincoln are excellent, and are, too, without either the mush or the smarty explain-all about the early years and the marriage with Mary Todd. This in a way is a guarantee of the book's general good sense and imagination.

STARK YOUNG

[1] The Illinois, by James Gray, illustrated by Aaron Bohrod. New York: Farrar and Rinehart. 365 pages. $2.50.

Hokum: Two Ways

ALFRED HITCHCOCK has done more than make a half-dozen first-class pictures of his own: he proved that a movie did not have to be slow, unimaginative and rump-sprung just because it was made in an English studio. "U-Boat 29" and "I Met a Murderer" showed very clearly the indebtedness of English film men to the revolutionary Hitchcock technique of putting one thing after another. And now the best of the current releases is an importation called "Blackout," a fast spy story.

You may remember the fine Hebrides Islands idyll of some time back, "Edge of the World." It was made by the same man, Michael Powell, and while it was a completely different sort of thing, a good part of our temporary acceptance of the present story's international high-jinks depends on the same sort of skill and good taste with settings. At the start, a Danish freighter is brought into a British contraband port for inspection, and this picture of ships at anchor, the life on the one ship itself, is gray and meaningful and right, even to the busy, desolate music of seagulls all around and gear creaking. As the story has it, the Danish captain is going to get his needed clearance, but meanwhile has to chase two escaped passengers to London. They all get to London in the blackout, and this has its oppressive and real atmosphere too. And so while it is still a mystery where the picture is going in the midst of all this scurry and clue-dropping, in a sense it is already there. Possibly in the sense that you forget the word "picture," as you certainly do when there is a scream across the street and the patrol cars pull up below.

In London it turns out that a very energetic nest of German spies has been set up in elaborately sinister quarters. Some characters finally escape and some almost don't and the thing winds up in a nicely contrived brawl, with a flying wedge of boys from the smorgasbord place, another flying wedge of unwitting old boys on a bender, a lot of broken breakables and a nick of time. Through much of this you'll find devices straight from Hitchcock: the clue of the banjo player, for example, or gadgets like the watch, the periscope mirrors, the message detector. But most of it comes out of the materials at hand—and one nice example of this is the captain's use of dead-reckoning navigation (he can see the stars in the blackout) to find where they took him in the taxi.

And of course with Conrad Veidt as the captain, they were in. He has the kind of address that lends credence to whatever he is up to, and whatever the job he is set, he has too much belief in dignity as such either to smirk at or go solemn on it. Outside of Valerie Hobson, who is just a little bit too Loretta Young to be entrusted with the fate of ships, men and national lifelines, the cast is varied and good, from the comic to the lethal.

Mark up another score for a moderate-budget picture worked out by a few people with belief and skill in their art, and care for its right detail. Even when the art is hokum, this is the way pictures are made and grow in time.

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In "The Letter" William Wyler did careful and at times artful work on the materials at hand, but the materials were a distinctly previous triangle plot, two murders, a sinister Oriental and the East. A woman who has killed her lover rather than lose him deceives her husband and his lawyer about it through the picture, with skill but at some cost to her nervous system, which was apparently never very stable. She evades the law but not the consequences to others, and after taking quite a lot of time about it she goes out through the garden under the moon to be killed. In making this, nothing was spared including the audience, and what was lacking or confused in the script is covered over with effects—for one thing the badly overscored splashes of theme music; for another, the half-lighting and trick-framing and suspense-entrancing, the symbols of the moon, the clouds, the palm tree.

The vitiating trouble here is that this version of a Somerset Maugham story treats itself as problem drama, as a probing of consequences and the human spirit; whereas the validity of it leaked out long ago and the true problem left is why don't they get it over with. It might be worth seeing for Bette Davis, who plays a borderline case with her usual daemonic finish, for some of the background and for some of the scenes—particularly the start of the one where the Japanese bells and glass beads are playing wildly in the hot breeze and the moment is at hand. Herbert Marshall is the cuckolded husband and seems to have deserved it; like the rest of the cast he goes through both problem and hokum with that fatal attitude of we're here because we're here because.

OTIS FERGUSON

Records: Praises Be

WITH CHRISTMAS COMING UP, it is probably well to note that the record companies have been doing very well by the music of Johann Sebastian Bach of late. First of all it is worth noting that The Musical Offering, his finely integrated collection of fugal studies on a theme played for him by Frederick the Great, is now available complete on records for the first time (Victor M-709, 12 sides; $6.50). It was old Bach's last major creation in the field of chamber music, and into it he wrote enough of his great skill and accumulated wisdom to make it—from several points of view—a quite wonderful piece. As to the performance, Yella Pessl gets off to a choppy start in the opening Ricercare, but her harpsichord playing picks up later in the Trio Sonata with Frances Blaisdell (flute), and Sylvan Shulman (violin). Two sets of canons and canonic elaborations on Frederick's tricky theme (they run forward, backward, upside down, and in circle, crab and mirror versions) are expertly played by various combinations of the ensemble, which also includes four strings usually identified as the Stuyvesant Quartet, an oboe, English horn and bassoon. The climax of the Offering, the final six-part Ricercare, was recorded some years ago by the strings of Edwin Fischer's Chamber Orchestra (Victor 8660, 2 sides; $1), and the choice between the two versions is not easy. Fischer's is sweeping and architectural; the latest (adapted by Dr. H. T. David), while indifferently phrased, probably comes closer to Bach's original idea; it is more intimate, and the line of each of its six voices, a unique blend of four strings and three double-reeds, is more distinct.

By way of reminder that the human voice can be beautiful when properly used there is also the album containing eight Bach chorales sung by the finely blended voices of the Trapp Family Choir (Victor M-713, 4 ten-inch records; $3.50). I only wish that in singing different verses of the same chorale the Trapps could have made use of the many different versions that Bach wrote, thus avoiding a slight monotony. And while Chorale No. 63 in the St. Matthew Passion is fine as it stands, Bach did create more beautiful versions, both in that work and in the Christmas Oratorio.

Bach's Violin Concerto in D Minor, somewhat woody and rigid by today's standards of violin music, you can now obtain in a new version by Szigeti and the New Friends of Music Orchestra (Columbia M-418, 6 sides; $3.50). It was recorded while Columbia was experimenting with ways to eliminate surface noise (accomplished in this case only by sacrificing refinement of tone), but you could hardly ask for a better performance. Columbia's technicians got better results when they set up their equipment in the Cathedral of Saint Jean in Lyon (unoccupied) France, and recorded Bach's great Fantasia and Fugue in C Minor played by Edouard Commette (70087, 2 sides; $1). The tone of this big organ is dull and a little clouded, but there is power and grandeur in the music and the playing is very fine.

The three wonderful albums of Bach organ music recorded for Columbia by Albert Schweitzer some years ago have not since been surpassed, or probably even equaled, but Victor has also erected something of a monument to Bach as a composer of organ music, having now released the last of three volumes containing the forty-six chorales in his Little Organ Book, played on the Baroque organ at Harvard by E. Power Biggs (M-652, 6 sides; $3.50: M-697, 5 sides; $3: M-711, 4 sides; $2.50). Biggs is a little detached and prim, but highly competent, and according to the theory dear to the hearts of all purists—that Bach is only Bach on an organ of his own period—this recording should be clarity itself. It is not quite that. You'll have to cup your ear to catch any of the much-touted lucidity of the Baroque instrument. Its tones are bright and sharp, and its voices distinct enough at times, but things frequently become muddy when the chords begin to thicken. Unfortunately several records in Volumes I and II are wavery. Volume III, concerned with music for Christmas and New Year's Eve, is the most seasonal, and probably the most satisfactory.

Four fairly representative organ works of César Franck, played with sympathy and skill by the composer's countryman, Dr. Charles Courboin, on the organ of the American Academy of Arts and Letters, are now to be found in a beautifully recorded Victor album (M-695, 6 sides; $3.50). There is the Pastorale from Opus 19, trivial on the score, but delicate in timbre as recorded. There is one movement from the Chorale in E Major—the sort of thing you look for in Franck, with its cloistered introspective mood and autumnal shadings; the famous Chorale in A Minor and the windy blasts of Pièce Héroique, something you probably won't want to play more than once, although a lot of organists seem to. The rest next time.

STANLEY FERGUSON

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The Bandwagon

George Layton Morris grabbed a bomb from a London apartment, carried it down the fire escape, across the street to a nearby park. He was arrested and fined $100, because none but those in authority can decide where bombs may be deposited. – *News story in The Friendly News, a Chicago neighborhood paper.*

K. T. writes: My mother, eighty years old, drinks two pints of gin a week. Will this injure her health?

REPLY: Not permanently. – *Question and answer in Dr. Irving S. Cutler's "How to Keep Well" column in The Chicago Tribune.*

Schow, a WPA laborer, was sentenced yesterday by Judge Frank M. Padden in Safety Court to ten days in the county jail for reckless driving. His driving privileges were suspended for the same period. – *From The Chicago Tribune.*

Oh, the Little More and How Much It is!

During the preliminary investigation conducted by Captain Charles Armstrong to confirm the identity of the slain man, the latter's father revealed that in recent months his son had been reading Socrates and that, as a result, his behavior was somewhat unusual.

It was learned, also, that in addition to his having perused the teachings of the Athenian philosopher, who frustrated his imprisonment for "impiety" and "innovation" by drinking a lethal dose of hemlock, four centuries before the dawn of the Christian era, the idle carpenter had taken "a couple of beers" before retiring at 10 o'clock last night. – *From The Bronx Home News.*

Never Hurt a Bit

The antique positions taken by the characters in these illustrations, the simple freshness with which their outlines are drawn, go far toward taking the sting of eroticism out of Boccaccio's work. – *From an announcement of a new limited edition of The Decameron, in the Heritage Club's catalogue.*

Sour Grapes of Wrath

On the contrary, I firmly believe that approximately this percentage [70 percent] of newspaper readers voted for Willkie but that he was defeated by those unfortunates who not only do not read newspapers but do not read at all. – *From a letter to The New York Times.*

Under Four Flags

In her New York separation suit, Mrs. Donnelly said her husband had been held in Jerusalem last March as a German spy. He countered with the charge, supported by British records, that she was a sort of Mata Hari suspect, who perambulated suspiciously among the pyramids and kept dates with a Bedouin sheik, a parcel of Italian aviators, a mysterious Swede and the Governor-General of Ethiopia. – *From a special dispatch from Reno to The New York Daily News.*

Our readers are invited to contribute to this column; $1 will be paid for each item used. Address Bandwagon, care of The New Republic. Please enclose the original clipping. – THE EDITORS

Correspondence

Mr. Saroyan on William Saroyan

SIR Everyone will know I am grateful that so distinguished an American critic as Edmund Wilson has examined and written about some of my work [The New Republic, November 18], inasmuch as heretofore the most distinguished critic to write of my work has been myself. I find, however, that there are quite a number of innocent misconceptions in Mr. Wilson's piece which, nevertheless, call for a few words from my side of the story, in the interest of a better if not fuller literary criticism. In other words, I shall here coöperate with the critic rather than quarrel.

I do not believe you have to begin by saying that my work derives from the work of Hemingway. I have studied the matter of literary influences—what makes a writer write the way he writes—and I am sincere when I say I believe my work derives from myself. I never studied anybody's writing. I studied the material and method of writing at its source. Between the ages of thirteen and twenty-one it is true that I read a good deal—in order to escape boredom and to bide time—but I read *everybody*. In one of my first stories I myself expressed an affection for the work of Anderson and Hemingway, but at the same time criticized this work. Probably the greatest influence on my writing has been the spoken old country story: spontaneous, unpredictable, by turns critical and compassionate, and full of the personality of the story-teller. Almost every Armenian I know is a story-teller, and the very best I know are my own relatives. I happen to write my stories, although I tell them, too. In a book I have just completed, "Saroyan's Fables," the writing is the closest thing to talk I have seen.

It is true that in addition to my three produced and published plays, there exist several others: "Sweeney in the Trees," "Something About a Soldier," "The Hero of the World," "Across the Board on Tomorrow" and parts of still several more, "Beware of the Dog," "The Old Imperial Dream," "The Electric Chair," "The Lion Tamer" and quite a few shorter plays—but among the finished but unproduced plays I think is my best work so far; and among the plays in process is still better work. By better I mean more casual—pertinent.

I must make known that "Love's Old Sweet Song" is not by any stretch of the imagination a parody of "The Grapes of Wrath," and that its meaning is not that the unemployed are unemployable. That play is simply a little human comedy —about everybody, and how funny they are, no matter how you look at them. Nothing has embarrassed or disappointed me more than the failure of everybody to recognize the sorrowful affection in that play for all human beings, including the dispossessed.

San Francisco, Calif. WILLIAM SAROYAN

The Need for Senators-at-Large

SIR: Mr. Willkie's decision to serve American democracy as active leader of the opposition, in spite of the handicaps resulting from defeat and lack of official status, should focus attention on our failure to provide adequate representation for minorities. To remedy this defect, I suggest a constitutional

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amendment giving all defeated presidential candidates, who receive five percent or more of the popular vote, official standing as Senators-at-large, fully equal to other Senators save for a term of four years. This provision should enable opposing parties to function responsibly and democratically, and avoid destroying them or driving them underground.

A companion fault lies in the fact that the President is our sole official elected by all the people. He alone confronts the sectionalism of Congress as representative of the whole nation. This fact, plus the growing need for unified leadership, is responsible for the recent increase of presidential powers at the expense of Congress. Hence we need yet another amendment that would limit the states to one Senator each, and provide for an equal number of Senators-at-large to be elected by the whole nation irrespective of state lines. Perhaps such Senators-at-large should serve for four years, or for eight years with terms staggered, to avoid biennial elections; but their standing and rights should not exceed those of Senators from the states. Some of these legislative representatives of the whole people might become effective statesmen in opposition to the administration; others might be its ablest supporters; but all should be less biased counsellors on national affairs than sectional legislators or appointed Cabinet officers could be.

Enid, Okla. RALPH WALDO NELSON

They Loved Liberty

SIR: In Southern France, crude, cavelike shelters provide homes for more than 150,000 men, women and children, and 4,000 members of the International Brigades. They constitute the bulk of the Spanish refugees forced to flee from Franco Spain two years ago. Mexico and various other Latin American republics have officially opened their lands to these unfortunate people. We urge readers of The New Republic to send donations, no matter in what amount, to the first American Rescue Ship Mission, 200 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

New York City AMERICAN RESCUE SHIP MISSION

Ferguson Fan

SIR: "Young Man with a Horn Again" [The New Republic, November 18] is one of the most remarkable pieces of writing that has come to my attention for many a year. It starts out advertising a few records by a number-two company and proceeds to enrich literature. We used to wish for the Great American Novel. Otis Ferguson has written it in one chapter and with one character. I read it twice and memorized several of its phrases, and now I am going back over all the issues of The New Republic to read the Ferguson articles I missed through ignorance and a fear of critiques and reviews. I am so provincial that I never even heard of Bix Beiderbecke, but I am going to buy his records.

Fruitvale, Calif. SIGISMUND BLUMANN

Execution, December 27

SIR: Returning to his farm in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, to find his aged mother and young wife evicted and his share of a wheat crop cultivated by them withheld by the white landlord, Odell Waller, twenty-three-year-old Negro sharecropper, went to this landlord to obtain his crop or compensation therefor. The landlord, in refusing, cursed him and made a threatening motion toward his gun pocket, and Waller shot him in imminent fear for his own life. Despite this evidence, he was convicted by a jury—twelve whites, including ten planters, who could afford to pay the $1.50 Virginia poll tax—and was sentenced to die December 27.

He deserves a fair trial by a jury of his peers, and to the end of achieving that the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, in coöperation with the Workers' Defense League, is soliciting contributions from its members and the interested public for a defense fund.

New York City WALTER WHITE, Secretary

Praise from a Willkie Voter

SIR: The paragraphs entitled "Roosevelt's Mandate," in the November 11 issue of The New Republic, are the finest and most unbiased analysis of the reasons for the voters' decisions in the recent campaign that I have read in any of the daily or weekly journals.

I do not regret voting for Mr. Willkie (I voted for Mr. Roosevelt in 1932 and 1936). I voted as I did for the last reason you gave: though for Mr. Roosevelt "on social and international grounds," many citizens "were disappointed with the economic results of the New Deal." I am particularly pleased that The New Republic feels that the President needs to pay most attention to that phase of the opposition. I hope it will keep on saying so.

Lawrenceville, N. J. ERNEST E. RICH

From The New Republic Mail Bag

A reader from Poughkeepsie, New York, who signs herself NOT AMUSED, wants us to reprint in the Bandwagon the first two paragraphs of the communication, "Subway Night: London" [The New Republic, December 2], under the caption "Frightfully Funny." "I think you owe it to outraged readers to tell them whether the lady who found bomb-shelter conditions so very amusing is one of the thousands who have to spend half their time in such mass shelters, or whether she belongs to a more fortunate class and was—as would appear—just 'out for experience.'" The fact is that the author of that letter and her companion had been living for some months in a house which had been half-wrecked by bombs and was without heat, light or water. Both are very poor and have preserved nothing but courage and a sense of humor—like many in London.

Bernard J. Reis, one of the directors of American Investors' Union, Inc., amplifies our statement (November 18) that because of the SEC, many of the evils of Wall Street which John T. Flynn attacked have been ameliorated or have disappeared. Mr. Reis points out that the SEC does an excellent job of policing Wall Street, and of making available for experts information not previously obtainable, but does not sufficiently protect the investor. He quotes Chairman Frank, of the SEC, as having declared in The New York World-Telegram on February 6, 1940: "If somebody came in [to the SEC], registered securities and said he proposed to embezzle every Thursday, there is nothing in our statutes that would permit us to prevent him selling them after the legal waiting period of twenty days after registration had passed."

From Ellis Island, H. T. Tsiang, author of "China Marches On" and other books, asks New Republic readers to send a postcard to Attorney General Robert Jackson, asking him to give his personal attention to his case. Mr. Tsiang was held for deportation for seven months, released in April, 1940, and is again held on a deportation warrant.

No insults for New Republic poets in this week's mail. Helen Millet Smith, of New York City, thought Babette Deutsch's review (December 2) of Edna St. Vincent Millay's "Make Bright the Arrows," unduly harsh; but she herself, a poet, writes with amazing politeness.

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Books in Review

The Californians[1]

CONTEMPORARY CALIFORNIA has thus been described by our novelists at least as extensively as any other part of the country. Yet somehow the California writers—and this is true even of Steinbeck, the best equipped of them—do not seem to carry a weight proportionate to the bulk of their work.

Why is this? All visitors from the East know the strange spell of unreality which seems to make human experience on the Coast as hollow as the life of a troll-nest where everything is out in the open instead of being underground. I have heard a highly intelligent Los Angeles lawyer who had come to California from Colorado remark that he pinched himself periodically to remind himself of the fact that he was living in a sensational world which he ought to get down on paper, but that he could never pull out of the trance sufficiently to react and to judge in what he still at the back of his mind considered the normal way. There is in one of these Hollywood novels, "You Play the Black and the Red Comes Up," a veracious account of the feelings of a man leaving Southern California behind him. The hero has just crossed the mountains after a great career of love and crime. And yet "it was like all I had done in California was just a dream. And at first it felt good, and then it felt worse, because Sheila was only a dream with everything else. And that was bad. I could remember everything about California, but I couldn't feel it. I tried to get my mind to remember something that it could feel, too, but it was no use. It was all gone. All of it. The pink stucco houses and the palm trees and the stores built like cats and dogs and frogs and ice-cream freezers and the neon lights round everything."

This is partly no doubt a matter of climate: the empty sun and the incessant rains; and of landscape: the dry mountains and the vast void of Pacific space; the hypnotic rhythms of day and night that revolve with unblurred uniformity, and of the surf that seems to roll up the beach with a purposeless expressionless beat after the moody assaults of the Atlantic. Add to this the remoteness from the East and the further remoteness from Europe. New York has its own insubstantiality that is due to the impermanence of its people, of its buildings, of its businesses, of its thoughts; but all the wires of our western civilization are buzzing and crossing here. California looks away from Europe, and out upon a wider ocean and an Orient with which, for white Americans, the cultural communication is slight.

This problem of the native Californian to give his literary personality reality is shown interestingly in Hans Otto Storm's "Count Ten." "If things now and then did not look real to you; if you were bothered by that particular question, Eric thought, then you ought certainly to keep off the Gulf of California. It hadn't looked real the time they did or did not bathe their feet in it and eat the clams, and it certainly did not look real now, this deadish place where no ships ever came and where the waves move with such an unutterable weariness." The hero is puzzled but his interest is pricked by an Easterner he meets at Berkeley, who misses the New England seasons and tries to explain to him the dramatic character which they impart to the cycle of the year; and when, gazing over San Francisco bay, he quotes Heine to one of his girls, she objects: "'That isn't Heine any more. It's a hakku. It makes me think of tea-cakes without salt.' She shivered a little. 'It's getting cold. No, that doesn't click in California. In California you can't sit and meditate on through the sunset.'" He applies himself to learning Chinese.

Add to this that the real cultural center, San Francisco, with its cosmopolitanism and its Bohemian clubs, the city of Bret Harte and Ambrose Bierce, was arrested in its natural development by the earthquake of 1906, and that thereafter the great anti-cultural amusement-producing center, Los Angeles, grew up, gigantic and vulgar, like one of those synthetic California flowers, and tended to drain the soil of the imaginative life of the state. In this city which swarms and crawls with writers, none yet has really mustered the gumption to lay bare the heart and bowels of the moving-picture industry. The novels I have mentioned above only trifle with the fringes of Hollywood, as the stage comedies like "Boy Meets Girl" only kid it in a superficial way. A novel on a higher level of writing than any of those I have mentioned—"The Day of the Locust" by Nathanael West, whom I have not discussed in this series only because I have already written at length about two of his books in these pages—is also mostly occupied with extras and gives mere glimpses into the upper reaches. Aldous Huxley's California novel, "After Many a Summer Dies the Swan," which should also be included in this round-up, does not get even so far into the subject as his compatriot Mr. Eric Knight, the author, under a pseudonym, of "You Play the Black," etc. Mr. Huxley here seems well on his way to becoming a second-rate American novelist: satirizing in more or less conventional fashion the Hearstian millionaire, the vapid Hollywood beauty and the burlesque pomps of a Los Angeles cemetery, he has succumbed to one of the impostures with which California deludes her victims most ruinously: the West Coast religious cult; and Mr. Huxley and Mr. Gerald Heard will be lucky if they do not wake up some morning to find themselves transformed into big Yogis and installed in one of those Wizard-of-Oz temples that puff up their bubblelike domes among the snack bars and the lion farms.

The book about Hollywood with most teeth in it is still that intrepid satire by Anita Loos called "The Better Things of Life," which came out serially in the Cosmopolitan and was repeatedly announced to appear in book form, but which never actually did. In Hollywood, those who

[1] This is the last of a series of articles dealing with a group of American novelists, which includes James M. Cain, John O'Hara, William Saroyan, Hans Otto Storm and John Steinbeck.

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know don't tell; and those who tell either don't seem to know much or do not venture beyond the edges.[1]

But, as I say, it is not merely in Los Angeles that the purposes and passions of humanity have the appearance of playing their roles in a great open-air amphitheatre which lacks not only acoustics to heighten and clarify the speeches but even an attentive audience at whom they may be directed. The paisanos of "Tortilla Flat" also live and die in a golden and limitless sunlight which never becomes charged with human energies; and the rhapsodies of William Saroyan, diffused in this air which never vibrates, pass by without repercussions. Even the monstrous, the would-be elemental, the would-be barbaric tragedies which Robinson Jeffers works hard to heap up are all like cloud dramas that fade away to sea, leaving only on our faces a slight moisture and in our ears a slight echo of hissing. In a sense, it is a good deal too easy to be a nihilist on the coast at Carmel: your very negation is a negation of nothing.

The only theme, when all is said and done, that keeps its seriousness for these Californian novelists is the theme of the class war.

The men and women of the Cain-O'Hara novels are doomed: they are undone by their own characters or by circumstances. But in time—as in Cain's "Serenade" and O'Hara's "Hope of Heaven" [2]—the socialist diagnosis and the socialist hope begin to appear in the picture.

This was true, of course, during this period, of our American fiction in general; but the labor cause has been dramatized with more impact by these writers of the Western coast than it has been on the whole in the East, where the formulas of Marxist theory are likely to take the place of experience. I do not mean the Hollywood Stalinism which is satirized by Mr. McCoy in the swimming-pool scene of "I Should Have Stayed Home"; I mean the tradition of radical writing which Californians like Storm and Steinbeck are carrying on after Frank Norris,[3] Jack London and Upton Sinclair.

This tradition dates from Henry George, who saw the swallowing of the whole state by capital put through in record time in the sixties and seventies of the last century. In our century the labor war has been fought out there more nakedly and more savagely than—except for the more primitive parts of the South—perhaps anywhere else in the country. The McNamaras, Mooney and Billings, the Wobblies and Vigilantes, the battles of the longshoremen and the fruit-pickers, the San Francisco general strike—these are the events which have wrung blood and tears in the easy California climate; and it is this conflict that has given Mr. Storm his orientation in the Pacific vacuum among the directions of the larger world, that has communicated to Mr. Steinbeck the impetus which has carried the Joad jalopy into the general consciousness of the nation.

Here the Californians know what they are talking about and they have something arresting to say. In pointing out the deficiencies of their books, I do not mean to deny them interest and value. The West Coast writer, as I have said, is up against peculiar difficulties. But California, since we took it away from the Mexicans, has always presented itself as one of the strangest of the American adventures; and it is the duty of the writer, precisely, to struggle with new phases of experience, and to give them beauty and sense.

EDMUND WILSON

[1] The relation between the movies and prose fiction works two ways. There are the actual writers for the pictures like Mr. West and Mr. Cain who produce sour novels about Hollywood. And there are the serious novelists who do not write for the films but are influenced by them in their novels. Since the people who control the movies will not go a step of the way to give the script writer a chance to do a serious script, the novelist seems, consciously or unconsciously, to be going part of the way to meet the producers. John Steinbeck, in "The Grapes of Wrath," has certainly learned from the films—and not only from the documentary pictures of Pare Lorentz, but from the sentimental symbolism of Hollywood. The result was that "The Grapes of Wrath" went on the screen as easily as if it had been written in the studios, and was probably the only serious story on record that seemed equally effective as a film and as a book. And Hemingway's "For Whom the Bell Tolls," as predicted in this department, has already been snapped up by Hollywood.

[2] O'Hara is not a Californian either by birth or by adoption. Except in "Hope of Heaven," he has the Eastern edge and tension.

[3] Steinbeck's close relationship with Norris is indicated by what is evidently a borrowing from "McTeague" in "Of Mice and Men." The recurrent dialogue between Norris's Polish junk dealer and the cracked Spanish-American girl, in which he is always begging her to describe for him the gold table service she remembers from her childhood, must have suggested the recurrent dialogue between Lennie and George, in which the former is always begging the latter to tell him more about the rabbit farm they are going to have. Steinbeck's whole attitude toward his rudimentary characters probably owes a good deal to Norris.

The Men Behind the President

The President Makers: 1896 to 1919, by Matthew Josephson. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 584 pages. $3.75.

MR. JOSEPHSON'S TITLE suggests that an interesting book might be written on the men who have made Presidents—their characters, methods and purposes, and their consequent influence on history. It might be pointed out that this function of individual president-making began with the remaking of Cleveland by W. C. Whitney in 1892. Before that time there had been the laudable effort of strong Presidents to name their own successors, as in the case of the Virginia dynasty and Jackson-Van Buren, but the line of true president-makers begins with the growth of the boss system into national flowering in the nineties. Roscoe Conkling was a forerunner in his unsuccessful attempt to remake Grant in 1880; but the true succession begins, as I have said, with Whitney, and reaches its perfect type in Mark Hanna. Theodore Roosevelt was certainly a gift of God. In his effort to continue his policies through his successor he resembles his early predecessors, except for his itch for retaining his power. He was both a president-maker and unmaker. Poor Taft had a pathetic faith:

> He who with his hands the vessel made
> Will surely not in after wrath destroy.

But Roosevelt did just that. Wilson had two makers, George Harvey and Colonel House. Harding always gave credit to Harry Daugherty, "the only man who ever thought I could be President." Coolidge was self-made, with a police strike instead of a war for a background. Hoover was put over by a large group of extremely loyal but indiscreet and maladroit friends. Franklin Roosevelt was put in the running by Al Smith and guided to his first

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victory by Jim Farley, although the claim of Raymond Moley to be rated among the president-makers is not unworthy of discussion. In any case, Franklin Roosevelt as an instance of president-making is less striking than Willkie, the story of whose miss-making remains to be told.

> They sneer at me for being all awry.
> What! Did the hand then of the potter shake?

This is not the story which Mr. Josephson has chosen to tell. He has material for his theme in Hanna and House, but the emphasis of his book is not on them, nor on Theodore Roosevelt as a president-maker. He has written, instead, a brilliant and illuminating history of the executive during four administrations, in which president-making, always the king of political sports, bore fruit twice in a power behind or beside the throne. The similarities and more especially the divergences, in character and behavior, between Hanna and House are developed against the backgrounds furnished by the men they served: McKinley, soft as putty to receive any impression; Wilson, hard as steel but drawn by the magnetism of flattery. In the most important acts of both, which involved the country in war, their makers played politics. Hanna wrote after the Maine disaster, "I am not in favor of heedlessly precipitating the country into the horrors of war"; but lest the Democrats should steal the issue of *Cuba libre*, he joined the pressure group which forced McKinley to deny his Methodist conscience and deliver to Congress his message of war against a country which was seeking peace on any terms. The part which House played in bringing the country into war was more intricate. Undoubtedly his ultimate object was to make his president the arbiter of the world—a result which might have been achieved at Paris if the hands that held the cards, both Wilson's and House's, had not fumbled. In February, 1916, House agreed with Sir Edward Grey to propose a conference to end the War, with the assurance that if Germany refused or if the conference failed to make a peace favorable to the Allies, "the United States would (probably) leave the conference as a belligerent." In April, House was asking the pacifist Secretary of War, Newton D. Baker, about the disposition of troops to put down popular riots against entering the war. "It would be mistaken mercy to temporize with troubles of this sort." Yet House planned Wilson's campaign of 1916 on the slogan: "He kept us out of war." As Hanna made war in 1898 to gratify the country whipped into hysteria by Roosevelt and Hearst, House played up peace in 1916 to swing an electorate become more reasonable and skeptical.

Mr. Josephson believes in the personal element in history. As his other books, "The Robber Barons," "The Politicos," "The Life of Zola," show, he excels in portraiture, especially in contrasting types, as Herbert Croly and Louis Brandeis, Hanna and House, Roosevelt and Wilson. Certain generalizations stand out clearly, none more important than the effect of the last pair, professed liberals and reformers, in riveting the chains of an effete political and economic system on a people ready to move forward. If Roosevelt had not for personal ambition intervened in the movement which La Follette had initiated, "it would have resulted not merely in a *temporary* schism, a futile quarrel of personalities, a prating of 'righteousness' and the Decalogue—but the foundation of a true opposition party." Again if Wilson had not chosen soon after his election to work with his party as it stood, instead of imitating La Follette in Wisconsin in becoming its master, he would have built out of the half-corrupt, secretly reactionary Democratic Party a renewed, truly progressive party, and accomplished "a fundamental change and overhauling of our party system." The year 1912 was a critical one in American history, a year in which the movement of progress, which had been gathering force, was marshaled under two flags, and led to defeat by two men of broken faith.

ROBERT MORSS LOVETT

New Books for Children

The annual output of children's books shows some interesting trends and developments which almost promise to make this a renaissance period in children's literature. Writers are moving away from a superficial appeal to a consideration of children as they really are and of the part books play in their growth. This is a sphere for exploration. A real challenge lies in trying to find out what satisfies children's needs, widens their horizons through new content, gives free play to imagination and interests, and amuses them on their own level.

Publishers seem to be giving writers and artists a chance to coördinate their efforts to produce more beautiful books. Many of the illustrations are original and colorful. Formats and typography are attractive. Large, beautiful picture books are brought out for youngsters, and among the new books, some very artistic ones can be found for children of all ages.

One promising trend is that distinguished authors, who have hitherto written for adults, are now joining the lists of those writers who have attained distinction in this field. During the past year Gertrude Stein, Pearl Buck, André Maurois, Sally Benson, Kay Boyle and Elizabeth Goudge are some of those who have taken a hand at writing for children.

For the list for children of younger ages, Miss Stanton has chosen stories that are realistic and that deal with the things little children experience in their daily lives. This year there are more books of this type that have charm. Illustrations are, on the whole, better than the text.

Little children do not have a clear understanding of the difference between the real and the magic or unreal, and have no way of knowing that something that happens in a book cannot happen to them. If writers realized this, they would eliminate some of their attempts at being exotic or clever without regard to the effect on children.

When Miss Stanton says that very young children want realistic stories, she does not mean always, but only until they understand the real things around them so well that they can assimilate the excursions into the unreal. Children must have the ability to distinguish the difference between the two and to get the fun out of the exchange. By the time they are six or seven, children understand enough so that they can move into the fantastic without being confused or made anxious by it. Distortion of images is the basis for humor at these ages, but writers should realize that objects and relationships must be understood and images be clear before the distortion becomes humorous.

For the older children, books are chosen for their value in content, well conceived plot, convincing style, and humor of the particular age level. Children of these ages are in a great learning period in their lives, with a wide variety of interests developing. Books dealing with all periods, places and subjects are needed to satisfy these interests. This does not imply that stories are to be used as a means of sugar-coating a lot of in-

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formation but that stories in a historic or geographic setting not only should hold interest as stories but should be authentic in background and based as far as possible on genuine source materials. Why place a story in the South Seas or in China if the atmosphere created might just as well be Brooklyn?

Plots are convincing when they are based on conflicts and action in the world of nature and man that lie within the grasp of the children, and are not trumped-up action for action's sake. Directness of expression is the quality of style most worth searching for in selecting books for children of any age. The universal love for "Heidi" is based on interest in the simple activities of people in an earthy setting. "Little Women" is still a best seller because it brings to the young girl the realities and intricacies of family life.

Some books are chosen because they satisfy the children's need to find in the world of fantasy help in assimilating some of their own struggles and inner conflicts, or to find their own wishful thinking expressed and satisfied in the realm of fiction. Identification of themselves with characters in stories frequently helps build up a belief in themselves in a world of stern realities. Boys need stories of heroism and adventure and biographies of the great. Girls, too, need heroism and great people to identify themselves with. As critics, we should not overlook the books that express these human desires, in our search for those that have more literary quality from an adult point of view.

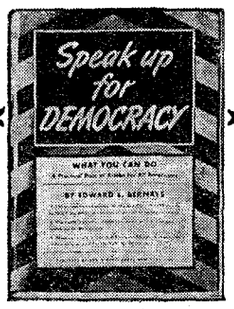
Are modern children developing any taste for good literature along with their absorption in the funnies, the movies and the "Heigho Silver" radio programs? Parents are asking this question constantly, and teachers are taking stock of their work with children to see if they can say that good books have just as large a place in the lives of children today as they had before all these newer and more extraverted forms of entertainment muscled their way into the home. The answer is yes. There is no need for competition between reading and other interests and amusements. The responsibility lies entirely in the hands of the adults on the scene. Reading is a delight to most children from the first moment they find they can read on their own, but the quality of the books and stories that they read comes from intelligent steering. Children need to grow up in a milieu of books and the enjoyment of books, and it's up to parents and teachers to create it.

An environment that produces love of reading must be positive and sympathetic, without too many prohibitions. More households are in a turmoil about the funnies than over any other cultural impact of the day. This seems unnecessary, as taste for the funnies will take its proper place, and the taste for second-rate books will be likely to be outgrown in an atmosphere where adult pressure does not arouse antagonism. The habit of reading for enjoyment is the important factor. Adults may very well respect children's choices in books, for, when they call a book "swell" or "dumb," there is usually some pretty good reason for it.

In a happy atmosphere of books and reading, good taste evolves naturally. Appreciating good writing is the outgrowth of experience with good books. In homes where people love good literature and read with the children, discussing the books as they would with friends, the children will love it, too.

ELLEN W. STEELE

A VIKING BOOK



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For Children Aged Four to Eight

PAT THE BUNNY, by Dorothy Kunhardt (16 pages; Simon and Schuster, $1). A tiny book—ingeniously made so that the pictures can be felt as well as seen. A big brother, five or six years old, could have a wonderful time showing it to a little two-year-old sister.

STORIES TO BEGIN ON, by Rhoda Bacmeister; photographs by Tom Maley (134 pages; Dutton, $1.50). Some delightful verses and stories by an author who really knows children. Just the kind of book for that cosy, intimate period before bedtime.

THE STORY OF COLETTE, by Francoise (28 pages; Scribner's, $1.50). It's hard to put in words the charm of this book. The full-page illustrations are naïve and childlike and carry the story of a little girl who lived alone and adopted many animals. All would have been well if only animals didn't have children so fast—"especially the rabbits."

THE RACE, by Clement Hurd (22 pages; Random House, $1.50). Gay, stylish, full-page illustrations that will make both adults and children chuckle, tell the story of the race between a duck and a monkey, who use all the modern methods of transportation in their desperate efforts to reach their goal.

THE LITTLE TRAIN, by Lois Lenski (44 pages; Oxford, 75 cents). The Little Train is a little gem. Engineer Small and Fireman Shorty take such good care of their little engine! All the details that children want to know about are shown in the pictures. The little train is even passed by a streamliner.

THE COUNTRY NOISY BOOK, by Margaret Wise Brown, illustrated by L. Weisgard (42 pages; William R. Scott, $1). Muffin, the little black dog of last year's Noisy Book, goes to the country. Children love this story because they can join in it, making appropriate noises for all the sounds that Muffin hears on his journey. Gay illustrations.

RUSTY, The Little Red Dachshund, by Dorothy K. L'Hommedieu, illustrated by Marguerite Kirmse (56 pages; Lippincott, $1.50). The story of a little red dachshund who goes adventuring to the sea with a duck, a rooster and a

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rabbit, with consequent complications that sound rather human. Charming pictures of the satiny-skinned dachshund.

STORIES FOR LITTLE CHILDREN, by Pearl Buck, illustrated by Weda Yap (44 pages; John Day, $1.50). A lovely book for children in the country. The stories are about sun and moon, clouds and snow, thunder and darkness; common experiences which are fraught with beauty and wonder for us all.

CAPS FOR SALE, by Esphyr Slobodkina (42 pages; William R. Scott, $1). What do you suppose the monkeys did when the poor cap peddler went to sleep just under their tree? Enchanting pictures with the decorative quality of paper cut-outs illustrate this very funny old folk tale. Highly recommended.

CEMENT WORK, by Grace Paull (32 pages; Viking, $1). Sport and Skinny are back again, hurray! They work hard and have fun on the farm all summer and finally help Father put a new cement floor in the barn. Colorful illustrations.

TIMOTHY TURTLE, by Alice Vaught Davis, illustrated by Guy Brown Wiser (32 pages; Harcourt, Brace, $1.50). Especially appealing and funny tale of the trouble that Timothy Turtle fell into and how his friend the squirrel streaked through the woods to get aid from all Timothy's little animal friends. Dramatic, spirited pictures. Highly recommended.

SALLY DOES IT, by Dorothy Walter Baruch and Elizabeth R. Montgomery, illustrated by Robb Beebe (73 pages; D. Appleton-Century, $1.50). There are nineteen stories in the book, all about Sally and the scrapes she gets into. Amusing and entertaining.

APRIL'S KITTENS, by Clare Turlay Newberry (36 pages; Harpers, $1.75). All cat-lovers will want to own this book. The most beautiful pictures of soft black furry kittens that were ever seen! A story accompanies the illustrations.

THE DOG CANTBARK, by Marjorie Fischer, illustrated by Roger Duvoisin (28 pages; Random House, $2). How a little white dog brought up by four musicians never to bark finally became a real dog. A large-size book with full-page illustrations.

HERCULES, by Hardie Gramatk (72 pages; Putnam's, $1.75). The little old-fashioned fire engine, obsolete and retired, suddenly comes to life and saves the town. Brilliant, amusing illustrations.

PETER BY THE SEA, by Julian R. Meade, illustrated by Grace Paull (145 pages; Doubleday, Doran, $1.50). Pleasant story of the summer adventures of a little boy and his family who lived by the seashore.

THE TINKERS OF TURNTABLE, by B. G. Herzog, illustrated by Susanne Suba (126 pages; William R. Scott, $1.75). An unusual book. A modern fairy tale in which magic happenings occur in an ordinary American family. Clever and amusing.

MAMINKA'S CHILDREN, by Elizabeth Orton Jones (108 pages; Macmillan, $2). Gentle, humorous stories about three little Bohemian children, many of them told by their mother who came from the Old Country. Dainty, clear illustrations.

For Children Aged Eight and Nine

THE LEGEND OF THE PALM TREE, text by Margarida Estrela Bandeira Duarte, illustrated by Paul Werneck (unpaged; Grosset & Dunlap, $1). Translated from the Portuguese, this large handsome picture book brings us an old Indian legend directly from its sources in Brazil.

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The pictures in rich, beautiful colors are by a distinguished Brazilian painter.

THE TALE OF THE WHITEFOOT MOUSE, by Henry B. Kane (unpaged; Knopf, $1.25). The story of Whitefoot is told sympathetically in words and in accurate, beautiful photographs, which catch the exciting moments of Whitefoot's life among the other animals of the woods.

THE SILVER DOLLAR, by Janette Sebring Lowrey, full-page colored lithographs by Barbara Latham (about 45 unnumbered pages; Harpers, $1.50). A shiny new dollar suggests to a little Texan the possibility of buying a cowboy outfit. How he gets it, even after losing the dollar, makes a pleasant story. The large illustrations, strong in design and color, are unusually artistic.

THE FABLES OF LA FONTAINE, translated by Margaret Wise Brown, illustrations by Andre Helle (39 pages; Harpers, $1.50). The excellent translations, attractive format and colorful illustrations of the book will bring to the modern child the fables that belong in everyone's background.

LITTLE JUNGLE VILLAGE, by Jo Besse McElveen Waldeck, illustrated by Katherine von Dombrowski (176 pages; Viking, $2). This is the adventurous story of a boy of eleven and his nine-year-old sister left in the jungles of Guiana. As they are mature in looking out for themselves at these ages, the story of how they survived makes engrossing reading. The author knows both children and the jungle.

AUGUSTUS GOES SOUTH, by Le Grand, illustrated by the author (128 pages; Bobbs-Merrill, $1.75). The sequel to "Augustus and the River" continues the account of the boy and his family, this time on the houseboat adventuring down the Mississippi to the bayous. A good tale of unusual characters told with vigorous humor.

THEE HANNAH! written and illustrated by Marguerite de Angeli (unpaged; Doubleday, Doran, $2). A little Quaker girl in Philadelphia in the 1850's is a very appealing character and her home life is vividly depicted in this charming story. Gay paintings in color and black-and-white drawings enliven the picture.

THAT MARIO, written and illustrated by Lucy Herndon Crockett (181 pages; Holt, $1.50). The author of "Lucio and His Nuong" tells a story of another lovable, lazy Filipino boy, whose desire to travel to Manila and his difficulties in getting there make entertaining reading. The black-and-white drawings recreate grotesquely the scenes in Mario's life.

THE SEA IS ALL AROUND, written and illustrated by Elizabeth Enright (124 pages; Farrar and Rinehart, $2). Winter on an island off the Massachusetts coast was a great experience to the little Iowa girl who visited her New England aunt. The author expresses with gentle humor the first-hand impressions of the place and people as they were taken in by the ten-year-old. Illustrations are in pastel colors. The book is very feminine.

PAGO GOES TO THE FAIR, by Richard C. Hill and Helen Hoke, illustrated by Ruth Gannett (unpaged; Holt, $2). This is a story of a ten-year-old boy of Ecuador, whose interest in the Incas of long ago leads him into and out of family troubles. The illustrations are important and valuable in depicting the authentic background of the land and people.

For Boys and Girls Aged Ten and Eleven

FAIR AMERICAN, by Elizabeth Coatsworth, illustrated by Helen Sewell (132 pages; Macmillan, $2). A little "emigré" at the time of the French Revolution makes a thrilling escape and voyage to America, during which he is protected by "Sally," of whom this author has written before. The story is exciting and there is good use of historical background. Stylized illustrations in black and white are decorative.

BLUEBERRY CORNERS, by Lois Lenski (209 pages; Stokes, $2). This is a jolly story of a big family in the Connecticut hill country in 1840, accurate in historical content, as are all the books of this author. Her own black-and-white drawings contribute charm and humor. Attractive format.

BLUE WILLOW, by Doris Gates, illustrated by Paul Lantz (172 pages; Viking, $2). A little girl of the migratory workers in San Joaquin Valley helps bring true her greatest wish that the family might sometime stay in one place "as long as we want to." The sturdy simplicity of her character prevents oversentimentality in the story.

FOR CHRISTMAS GIFTS

The titles listed below are among The New Republic's 100 NOTABLE BOOKS OF 1940

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CHILDREN OF THE SEA, by Wilfrid S. Bronson, black-and-white illustrations by the author (264 pages; Harcourt, Brace, $2). Life undersea could scarcely be made more vivid than in this story of a friendship between a dolphin and a native boy from Nassau. Accuracy of detail combined with adventure and fun lends unusual literary charm, and delightful drawings add beauty.

THE SECRET OF THE LODGE, by Noel Streatfeild, illustrated by Richard Floethe (233 pages; Random House, $2). Everyone loves a mystery, and this is a youngish mystery story in which some English children on a holiday on the Cornish coast catch their uncle in international intrigue. Streatfeild's usual lively children and an active plot will make an appeal to his many readers.

TORY HOLE, by Louise Hall Tharp, illustrated by Jessie Robinson (202 pages; Crowell, $2). An exciting story is built around difficulties of the American Revolution, due to the "fifth column" activities of Tory smugglers and self-seekers who did not care who won the war. The plot moves ahead rapidly and details are authentic.

PAM'S PARADISE RANCH, by Armine von Tempski, illustrations by Paul Brown (333 pages; Dodd, Mead, $2). Life on a ranch in Hawaii is filled with excitement for two little girls, Pam, who lives there, and Emily from Boston, whose new experiences become the theme of the story. The author knows Hawaiian life, the animals, natives and orientals, and her vivid portrayal stirs the reader with desire to know it, too.

STORIES OF THE GODS AND HEROES, by Sally Benson, illustrated by Steele Savage (256 pages; Dial, $2.50). A book of rare distinction. Miss Benson brings the children the story of the gods and heroes of Greek and Roman mythology in clear, picturesque style, made more graphic with black-and-white drawings in keeping with the text in imagination and composition.

For Boys and Girls Aged Twelve and Over

LOCK HER THROUGH, by Erick Berry, illustrations by author (246 pages; Oxford, $2). An Erie Canal story of the early nineteenth century, when drivers encountered plenty of action along the towpaths. An exciting plot grows out of the struggles and interplay of characters of the time, and the young people contribute their share to its solution.

RIVER EMPIRE, by Helen Clark Fernald and Edwin M. Slocombe, with illustrations by Eleanor Eadie and Gladys Peck (218 pages; Longmans, Green, $2). This is a regulation adventure story. Two boys set out in 1806 to journey on the great rivers from Quebec to New Orleans and found apparently that all rivers led to intrigue and excitement. The story moves ahead at a good pace.

THE KEEPERS OF ELEPHANT VALLEY, by Reginald Campbell, illustrated by Jack Matthew (299 pages; Random House, $2). Three young Hendersons in Siam go with their father in search of the rare white elephant and are swept into the drama of the jungle. The writer knows the background, and weaves one thrilling incident after another into an adventure with action and suspense.

CALL OF THE MOUNTAIN, by Cornelia Meigs, illustrated by James Daugherty (258 pages; Little, Brown, $2). This is a moving story of a boy in the Vermont wilderness in the 1830's, who achieves success as a farmer by overcoming great difficulties, both human and natural. Vigorous black-and-white drawings.

THE YEAR OF JUBILO, by Ruth Sawyer, illustrated with drawings by Edward Shenton (266 pages; Viking, $2). Lucinda of the "Roller Skates" is now fifteen and the family finds they must face a winter in their Maine summer cottage. The growing girl's conflict with her older brothers is told with sympathetic understanding. The author has caught the freshness of the Maine landscape.

MORGAN'S FOURTH SON, by M. I. Ross, pictures by James Daugherty (252 pages; Harpers, $2). The working-out of a conflict between an adolescent farm boy and a determined father is the theme of this interesting story. Descriptions of modern farming and fine farm animals are earthy and convincing. Daugherty's strong black-and-white drawings are appropriate to the scene.

For Boys and Girls—Non-Fiction

SKY ROADS, by Ernest K. Gann, photographs and drawings (121 pages; Crowell, $2). An American Airlines pilot tells the story of commercial aviation, from building the plane and training the pilot to airports, instruments and weather. Clear, simple text. Excellent photographs.

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Five of the New Republic's "100 NOTABLES" for this year.

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ANIMALS AS FRIENDS AND HOW TO KEEP THEM, by Margaret Shaw and James Fisher (271 pages; Dutton, $2.50). Sixteen photographs and twenty-one diagrams. This book will be invaluable for a child interested in all kinds of pets, wild or tame. It is sponsored by Julian Huxley and based on research as well as experience in the London Zoo and in the London Zoölogical Society's Library.

THINGS A BOY CAN DO WITH CHEMISTRY, by Alfred Morgan, illustrations by the author (280 pages; D. Appleton-Century, $2.50). This will help boys with a driving interest in the subject to gain understanding of the industrial need for chemistry today and, if a laboratory is available, to carry on experiments.

THE SONS OF VULCAN, by Thomas Hibben, black-and-white drawings by the author (259 pages; Lippincott, $2). Man, metals and tools in building civilization from early Egypt to the present, with excellent drawings of the objects described. Interesting reading and useful for reference.

WINGS FOR WORDS, the story of Johann Gutenberg and His Invention of Printing, by Douglas C. McMurtrie, illustrated by Edward A. Wilson (175 pages; Rand, McNally, $2). On the five hundredth anniversary of the invention of printing, an authority on this subject has written an exceptionally fine biography of Gutenberg. The typography, color plates and format of the book demonstrate the writer's knowledge of the art.

ROUNDABOUT SOUTH AMERICA, by Anne Merriman Peck, illustrated with black-and-white drawings by the author and sixteen photographs (359 pages; Harpers, $3). This book belongs on the list of "musts" for younger and older people who share the recent heightened interest in the Western Hemisphere. Richness of detail and clear, readable style make this a travel book that is far above the average.

AN ANTHOLOGY OF CHILDREN'S LITERATURE, edited by Edna Johnson and Carrie E. Scott, illustrations by N. C. Wyeth (917 pages; Houghton Mifflin, $5). A fine collection of stories and verse that will be excellent in any home library for use in reading aloud with children. Fine print is a disadvantage but it is more than balanced by scholarly editing. Paintings in a variety of colors decorate the book.

Contributors

WILLIAM HAMMATT DAVIS has held numerous municipal and federal posts. He has been a member of the New York City Housing Authority and national compliance director of the NRA. He is now a member of the New York State Labor Relations Board.

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JONATHAN MITCHELL, who lives in Washington, is well known for his articles on the political scene.

OSCAR WILLIAMS is the author of "The Man Coming Toward You," which has aroused more controversies than any other book of verse published this year.

STANLEY FERGUSON, a former orchestra player, now writes for a weekly paper in Washington.

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